

DOORWAY OF MARCO POLO'S HOUSE •

•  
CORTESABBIONERA AT VENICE.

THE BOOK  
SER MARCO POLO  
THE VENETIAN,

*Concerning the Kingdoms and Marvels  
of the East.*

NEWLY TRANSLATED AND EDITED, WITH NOTES.

BY COLONEL HENRY YULE, C.B.,  
(LATE OF THE ROYAL ENGINEER (GENIAL)),  
HON. FELLOW OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY OF ITALY.

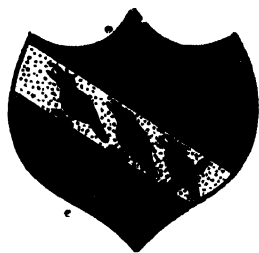
IN TWO VOLUMES. - Vol. I.

*WITH MAPS, AND OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS.*

LONDON:  
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.

1861

Ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε Μοῦσα πολύτρηπον· δὲ μάλα πολλὰ  
 Πλάγχθη . . . . .  
 Πελλῶν δ' ἀνθρώπων ἴδεν ἄστεα καὶ νόον ἔγνω.  
(Odyssey, I.



“ *A SEDER CI PONEMMO IVI AMBODUI  
 VÓLTI A LEVANTE OND' ERAVAM SÁLITI;  
 CHÈ SUOLE A RIGUARDAR GIOVARE ALTRUI.*”  
DANTE, *Purgatory*, IV.

TO  
HER ROYAL HIGHNESS,  
MARGHERITA,  
*Princess of Piedmont,*  
THIS ENDEAVOUR TO ILLUSTRATE THE LIFE AND WORK  
OF A RENOWNED ITALIAN  
IS,  
BY HER ROYAL HIGHNESS'S GRACIOUS PERMISSION,  
Dedicated  
WITH THE DEEPEST RESPECT  
BY  
H. YULE.



## PREFACE.

THE amount of appropriate material, and of acquaintance with the medieval geography of some parts of Asia, which was acquired during the compilation of a work of kindred character for the Hakluyt Society,\* could hardly fail to suggest as a fresh labour in the same field the preparation of a new English edition of Marco Polo. Indeed one kindly critic (in the *Examiner*) laid it upon the writer as a duty to undertake that task.

Though at least one respectable English edition has appeared since Marsden's,† the latter has continued to be the standard edition, and maintains not only its reputation but its market value. It is indeed the work of a sagacious, learned, and right-minded man, which can never be spoken of otherwise than with respect. But since Marsden published his quarto (1818) vast stores of new knowledge have become available in elucidation both of the contents of Marco Polo's book and of its literary history. The works of writers such as Klaproth, Abel-Rémusat, D'Avezac, Reinaud, Quatremère, Julien, L. J. Schmidt, Gilde-meister, Ritter, Hammer-Purgstall, Erdmann, D'Ohsson, Defrémery, Elliot, Erskine, and many more, which throw light directly or incidentally on Marco Polo, have, for the

\* *Cathay and The Way Thither, being a Collection of Minor Medieval Notices of China*. London, 1866. The necessities of the case have required the repetition in the present work of the substance of some notes already printed (but hardly published) in the other.

† Viz. Mr. Hugh Murray's. I mean to disrespect to Mr. T. Wright's edition, but it is, and professes to be, scarcely other than a reproduction of Marsden's, with abridgment of his notes.



most part, appeared since then. Nor, as regards the literary history of the book, were any just views possible at a time when what may be called the *Fontal* MSS. (in French) were unpublished and unexamined.

Besides the works which have thus occasionally or incidentally thrown light upon the Traveller's book, various editions of the book itself have since Marsden's time been published in foreign countries, accompanied by comments of more or less value. All have contributed something to the illustration of the book or its history; the last and most learned of the editors, M. Pauthier, has so contributed in large measure. I had occasion some years ago\* to speak freely my opinion of the merits and demerits of M. Pauthier's work; and to the latter at least I have no desire to recur here.

Another of his critics, a much more accomplished as well as more favourable one,† seems to intimate the opinion that there would scarcely be room in future for new commentaries. Something of the kind was said of Marsden's at the time of its publication. I imagine, however, that whilst our libraries endure the *Iliad* will continue to find new translators, and Marco Polo—though one hopes not so plentifully—new editors.

The justification of the book's existence must however be looked for, and it is hoped may be found, in the book itself, and not in the Preface. The work claims to be judged as a whole, but it may be allowable, in these days of scanty leisure, to indicate below a few instances of what is believed to be new matter in an edition of Marco Polo; by which however it is by no means intended that all such matter is claimed by the editor as his own.‡

\* In the *Quarterly Review* for July, 1868.

† M. Nicolas Khanikoff.

‡ In the Preliminary Notices will be found new matter on the Personal and Family History of the Traveller, illustrated by documents; and a more elaborate attempt

From the commencement of the work it was felt that the task was one which no man, though he were far better equipped and much more conveniently situated than the present writer, could satisfactorily accomplish from his own resources, and help was sought on special points wherever it seemed likely to be found. In scarcely any quarter was the application made in vain. Some who have aided most materially, are indeed very old and valued friends; but to many others who have done the same the applicant was unknown; and some of these again, with whom the editor began correspondence on this subject as a stranger, he is happy to think that he may now call friends.

To none am I more indebted than to the Cavaliere GUGLIELMO BERCHET, of Venice, for his ample, accurate, and generous assistance in furnishing me with Venetian documents, and in many other ways. Especial thanks are

than I have seen elsewhere to classify and account for the different texts of the work, and to trace their mutual relation.

As regards geographical elucidations, I may point to the explanation of the name *Ghehuchelan* (I. p. 55), to the discussion of the route from Kerman to Hormuz, and the identification of the sites of Old Hormuz, of *Cobinan* and *Dogana*, the establishment of the position and continued existence of *Kishm*, the note on *Fein* and *Charchan*, on *Gog* and *Magg*, on the geography of the route from *Sindafu* to *Carajan*, on *Anin* and *Coloman*, on *Mutafili*, *Cail*, and *Ely*.

As regards historical illustrations, I would cite the notes regarding the Queens *Bolgana* and *Cocachin*, on the *Kurannuks*, &c., on the title of King of *Bengal* applied to the K. of *Burma*, and those bearing upon the Malay and Abyssinian chronologies.

In the interpretation of outlandish phrases, I may refer to the notes on *Ondanigur*, *Nono*, *Berguerlac*, *Argon*, *Sensun*, *Keshkan*, *Toscaol*, *Bularguchi*, *Gat-paul*, &c.

Among miscellaneous elucidations, to the disquisition on the *Arbre Sol* or *Sac* in vol. i., and to that on Medieval Military Engines in vol. ii.

In a variety of cases it has been necessary to refer to Eastern languages for pertinent elucidations or etymologies. The editor would however be sorry to fall under the ban of the medieval adage :—

" *L'ir qui docet quod non sapit*  
*Definitur Bustin !*"

and may as well reprint here what was written in the Preface to *Cathay* :—

" I am painfully sensible that in regard to many subjects dealt with in the following pages, nothing can make up for the want of genuine Oriental learning. A fair familiarity with Hindustani for many years, and some reminiscences of elementary Persian, have been useful in their degree; but it is probable that they may sometimes also have led me astray, as such slender lights are apt to do."

## PREFACE.

also due to Dr. WILLIAM LOCKHART, who has supplied the materials for some of the most valuable illustrations; to Lieutenant FRANCIS GARNIER, of the French Navy, the gallant and accomplished leader (after the death of Captain Doudart de la Grée) of the memorable expedition up the Mekong to Yunnan; to the Rev. Dr. CALDWELL, of the S. P. G. Mission in Tinnevely, for copious and valuable notes on Southern India; to my friends Col. ROBERT MACLAGAN, R.E., Sir ARTHUR PHAYRE, and Col. HENRY MAN, for very valuable notes and other aid; to Professor A. SCHIEFNER, of St. Petersburg, for his courteous communication of very interesting illustrations not otherwise accessible; to Major-General ALEXANDER CUNNINGHAM, of my own corps, for several valuable letters; to my friends Dr. THOMAS OLDHAM, Director of the Geological Survey of India, Mr. DANIEL HANBURY, F.R.S., Mr. EDWARD THOMAS, Mr. JAMES FERGUSON, F.R.S., Sir BARTLE FRERE, and Dr. HUGH CLEGHORN, for constant interest in the work and readiness to assist its progress; to Mr. A. WYLIE, the learned Agent of the B. and F. Bible Society at Shanghai, for valuable help; to the Hon. G. P. MARSH, U. S. Minister at the Court of Italy, for untiring kindness in the communication of his ample stores of knowledge, and of books. I have also to express my obligations to Dr. NICOLÒ BAROZZI, Director of the City Museum at Venice, and to Professor A. S. MINOTTO, of the same city; to Professor ARMINIUS VÁMBÉRY, the eminent traveller; to Professor FLÜCKIGER, of Bern; to the Rev. H. A. JÄSCHKE, of the Moravian Mission in British Tibet; to Colonel LEWIS PELLY, British Resident in the Persian Gulf; to Pandit MANPHUL, C. S. I. (for a most interesting communication on Badakhshan); to my brother officer, Major T. G. MONTGOMERY, R.E., of the Indian Trigonometrical Survey; to Commendatore NEGRI, the in-

defatigable President of the Italian Geographical Society; to Dr. ZOTENBERG, of the Great Paris Library, and to M. CH. MAUNOR, Secretary-General of the Société de Géographie; to Professor HENRY GIGLIOLI, at Florence; to my old friend Major-General ALBERT FYTCHE, Chief Commissioner of British Burma; to Dr. ROST and Dr. FORBES-WATSON, of the India Office Library and Museum; to Mr. R. H. MAJOR, and Mr. R. K. DOUGLAS, of the British Museum; to Mr. N. B. DENNYS, of Hongkong; and to Mr. C. GARDNER, of the Consular Establishment in China. There are not a few others to whom my thanks are equally due; but it is feared that the number of names already mentioned may seem ridiculous, compared with the result, to those who do not appreciate from how many quarters the facts needful for a work which in its course intersects so many fields required to be collected, one by one. I must not however omit acknowledgments to the present Earl of DERBY for his courteous permission, when at the head of the Foreign Office, to inspect Mr. Abbott's valuable unpublished Report upon some of the Interior Provinces of Persia; and to Mr. T. T. COOPER, one of the most adventurous travellers of modern times, for leave to quote some passages from his unpublished diary.

PALESTINE, December 31, 1870.



# CONTENTS OF VOL. I.

DEDICATION .. .. .	PAGE V
PREFACE .. .. .	vii
EXPLANATORY LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS .. .. .	xiii

## INTRODUCTORY NOTICES

### REGARDING MARCO POLO AND HIS BOOK.

#### I. OBSCURITIES IN THE HISTORY OF HIS LIFE AND BOOK.

##### RAMUSIO'S STATEMENTS .. .. . xxxiii

§ 1. Obscurities, &c. 2. Ramusio his earliest Biographer; his Account of Polo. 3. He vindicates Polo's Geography. 4. Compares him with Columbus. 5. Recounts a Tradition of the Traveller's Return to Venice. 6. Recounts Marco's Capture by the Genoese. 7. His statements about Marco's liberation and marriage. 8. His account of the Family Polo and its termination.

#### II. SKETCH OF THE STATE OF THE EAST AT THE TIME OF THE JOURNEYS OF THE POLO FAMILY .. .. .

§ 9. State of the Levant. 10. The various Mongol Sovereignities in Asia and Eastern Europe. 11. China. 12. India and Indo-China.

#### III. THE POLO FAMILY. PERSONAL HISTORY OF THE TRAVELLERS TILL THEIR FINAL RETURN FROM THE EAST ..

§ 13. Alleged origin of the Polos. 14. Claims to Nobility. 15. The Elder Marco Polo. 16. Nicolo and Maffeo Polo commence their Travels. 17. Their Intercourse with Kublai Kaan. 18. Their return home, and Marco's appearance on the scene. 19. Second Journey of the Polo Brothers, accompanied by Marco. 20. Marco's Employment by Kublai Kaan; and his Journeys. 21. Circumstances of the departure of the Polos from the Kaan's Court. 22. They pass by Persia to Venice. Their relations there.

	PAGE
IV. DIGRESSION CONCERNING THE MANSION OF THE POLO FAMILY AT S. GIOVANNI GRISOSTOMO . . . . .	lv
§ 23. Probable period of their establishment at S. Giovanni Grisostomo.	
24. Relics of the Casa Polo in the Corte Sabbonera. 24a.	
Recent corroboration as to traditional site of the Casa Polo.	
V. DIGRESSION CONCERNING THE WAR-GALLEYS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN STATES IN THE MIDDLE AGES . . . . .	lx
§ 25. Arrangement of the Rowers in Medieval Gallies; a separate Oar to every Man. 26. Change of System in 16th Century. 27. Some details of 13th-Century Gallies. 28. Fighting Arrangements. 29. Crew of a Galley and Staff of a Fleet. 30. Music and miscellaneous particulars.	
VI. THE JEALOUSIES AND NAVAL WARS OF VENICE AND GENOA. LAMBA DORIA'S EXPEDITION TO THE ADRIATIC; BATTLE OF CURZOLA; AND IMPRISONMENT OF MARCO POLO BY THE GENOESE . . . . .	lxx
§ 31. Growing Jealousies and Outbreaks between the Republics. 32. Battle in Bay of Ayas in 1294. 33. Lamba Doria's Expedition to the Adriatic. 34. The Fleets come in sight of each other at Curzola. 35. The Venetians defeated, and Marco Polo a Prisoner. 36. Marco Polo in Prison dictates his Book to Rusticiano of Pisa. Release of Venetian Prisoners. 37. Grounds on which the story of Marco Polo's capture at Curzola rests.	
VII. RUSTICIANO OR RUSTICHELLO OF PISA, MARCO POLO'S FELLOW-PRISONER AT GENOA, THE SCRIBE WHO WROTE DOWN HIS TRAVELS . . . . .	lxxxiii
§ 38. Rusticiano, perhaps a Prisoner from Meloria. 39. A Person known from other Sources. 40. Character of his Romance Compilations. 41. Identity of the Romance Compiler with Polo's Fellow-prisoner. 42. Further particulars regarding Rusticiano.	
VIII. NOTICES OF MARCO POLO'S HISTORY AFTER THE TERMINATION OF HIS IMPRISONMENT AT GENOA . . . . .	xcii
§ 43. Death of Marco's Father before 1300. Will of his Brother Maffeo. 44. Documentary Notices of Polo at this time. The Sobriquet of <i>Milione</i> . 45. Polo's relations with Thibault de Cepoy. 46. His Marriage, and his Daughters. Marco as a Merchant. 47. His Last Will; and Death. 48. Place of Sepulture. Professed Portraits of Polo. 49. Further History of the Polo Family.	
IX. MARCO POLO'S BOOK; AND THE LANGUAGE IN WHICH IT WAS FIRST WRITTEN . . . . .	cvi
§ 50. General Statement of what the Book contains. 51. Language of the original Work. 52. Old French Text of the <i>Société de Géographie</i> . 53. Conclusive proof that the Old French Text is the source of all the others. 54. Greatly diffused employment of French in that age.	

# CONTENTS OF VOL. I.

XV

## X. VARIOUS TYPES OF TEXT OF MARCO POLO'S BOOK .. .. PAGE CXV

- § 55. Four Principal Types of Text. *First*, that of the Geographic or Oldest French. 56. *Second*, the Remodelled French Text; followed by Pauthier. 57. The Bern MS. and two others form a sub-class of this Type. 58. *Third*, Friar Pipino's Latin. 59. The Latin of Grynaeus, a Translation at Fifth hand. 60. *Fourth*, Ramusio's Italian. 61. Injudicious Tamperings in Ramusio. 62. Genuine Statements peculiar to Ramusio. 63. Hypothesis of the Sources of the Ramusian Version. 64. Summary in regard to Text of Polo. 65. Notice of a Curious Irish Version.

## XI. SOME ESTIMATE OF THE CHARACTER OF POLO AND HIS BOOK .. .. CXXIX

- § 66. Grounds of Polo's Pre-eminence among Medieval Travellers. 67. His true claims to glory. 68. His personal attributes seen but dimly. 69. Absence of scientific notions. 70. Map constructed on Polo's data. 71. Singular omissions of Polo in regard to China; historical inaccuracies. 72. Was Polo's Book materially affected by the Scribe Rusticiano? 73. Marco's reading embraced the Alexandrian Romances. Examples. 74. Injustice long done to Polo. Singular Modern Example.

## XII. CONTEMPORARY RECOGNITION OF POLO AND HIS BOOK .. .. CXL

- § 75. How far was there diffusion of his Book in his own day? 76. Contemporary References to Polo. T. de Cepoy; Pipino; Jacopo d'Acqui; Giov. Villani. 77. Pietro d'Abano; Jean le Long of Ypres. 78. Curious borrowings from Polo in the Romance of Bauduin de Sebourg.

## XIII. NATURE OF POLO'S INFLUENCE ON GEOGRAPHICAL KNOWLEDGE .. .. cli

- § 79. Tardy operation, and causes thereof. 80. General characteristics of Medieval Cosmography. 81. Roger Bacon as a Geographer. 82. Marino Sanuto the Elder. 83. The Catalan Map of 1375, the most complete medieval embodiment of Polo's Geography. 84. Fra Mauro's Map. Confusions in Cartography of the 16th Century from the endeavour to combine new and old information. 85. Gradual disappearance of Polo's nomenclature. 86. Alleged introduction of Block-printed Books into Europe by Marco Polo. 87. Frequent opportunities for such introduction in the Age following Polo's.

## XIV. EXPLANATIONS REGARDING THE BASIS ADOPTED FOR THE PRESENT TRANSLATION .. .. clix

- § 88. Texts followed by Marsden and by Pauthier. 89. Eclectic Formation of the English Text of this Translation. 90. Mode of rendering Proper Names.



## THE BOOK OF MARCO POLO.

## PROLOGUE.

	PAGE
PRELIMINARY ADDRESS OF RUSTICIANO OF PISA .. ..	1
CHAP. I.—HOW THE TWO BROTHERS POLO SET FORTH FROM CONSTANTINOPLE TO TRAVERSE THE WORLD .. ..	2
NOTES.—1. <i>Chronology.</i> 2. <i>"The Great Sea."</i> 3. <i>The Port of Soldaia.</i>	
II.—HOW THE TWO BROTHERS WENT ON BEYOND SOLDAIA ..	4
NOTES.—1. <i>Site and Ruins of Sarai.</i> 2. <i>City of Bolghar.</i> 3. <i>Alau Lord of the Levant (i.e., Hülaku).</i> 4. <i>Ucaca on the Wolga.</i> 5. <i>River Tigri.</i>	
III.—HOW THE TWO BROTHERS, AFTER CROSSING A DESERT, CAME TO THE CITY OF BOCARA, AND FELL IN WITH CERTAIN ENVOYS THERE .. ..	9
NOTES.—1. <i>"Bocara a City of Persia."</i> 2. <i>The Great Kaan's Envoys.</i>	
IV.—HOW THE TWO BROTHERS TOOK THE ENVOYS' COUNSEL, AND WENT TO THE COURT OF THE GREAT KAAN ..	11
V.—HOW THE TWO BROTHERS ARRIVED AT THE COURT OF THE GREAT KAAN .. ..	11
VI.—HOW THE GREAT KAAN ASKED ALL ABOUT THE MANNERS OF THE CHRISTIANS, AND PARTICULARLY ABOUT THE POPE OF ROME .. ..	11
NOTE.— <i>Apostoville.</i>	
VII.—HOW THE GREAT KAAN SENT THE TWO BROTHERS AS HIS ENVOYS TO THE POPE .. ..	12
NOTES.—1. <i>The Great Kaan's Letter.</i> 2. <i>The Seven Arts.</i> 3. <i>Religious Indifference of the Mongol Princes.</i>	
VIII.—HOW THE GREAT KAAN GAVE THEM A TABLET OF GOLD, BEARING HIS ORDERS IN THEIR BEHALF .. ..	14
NOTES.—1. <i>The Tablet.</i> 2. <i>The Port of Avas.</i>	
IX.—HOW THE TWO BROTHERS CAME TO THE CITY OF ACRE; AND THENCE TO VENICE .. ..	16
NOTES.—1. <i>Names of the deceased Pope and of the Legate.</i> 2. <i>Negropont.</i> 3. <i>Mark's age.</i>	
X.—HOW THE TWO BROTHERS AGAIN DEPARTED FROM VENICE, ON THEIR WAY BACK TO THE GREAT KAAN, AND TOOK WITH THEM MARK, THE SON OF MESSER NICOLAS .. ..	18
NOTE.— <i>Oil from the Holy Sepulchre.</i>	

# CONTENTS OF VOL. I.

CHAP.		PAGE
XI.	HOW THE TWO BROTHERS SET OUT FROM ACRE, AND MARK ALONG WITH THEM .. .. .	19
	NOTE.— <i>Pope Gregory X. and his Election.</i>	
XII.	HOW THE TWO BROTHERS PRESENTED THEMSELVES BEFORE THE NEW POPE .. .. .	21
	NOTES.—1. <i>William of Tripoli.</i> 2. <i>Powers conceded to Missionary Priars.</i> 3. <i>Bundukdor and his Invasion of Armenia.</i> 4. <i>The Templars in Cilician Armenia.</i>	
XIII.	HOW MESSER NICOLAS AND MESSER MAFFEO POLO, ACCOMPANIED BY MARK, TRAVELLED TO THE COURT OF THE GREAT KAAH .. .. .	24
	NOTE.— <i>The City of Kemonfu, Summer Residence of Kublai.</i>	
XIV.	HOW MESSER NICOLO AND MESSER MAFFEO POLO AND MARCO PRESENTED THEMSELVES BEFORE THE GREAT KAAH .. .. .	25
	NOTES.—1. <i>Verbat.</i> 2. <i>Vostre Homme.</i>	
XV.	HOW THE LORD SENT MARK ON AN EMBASSY OF HIS .. .. .	27
	NOTES.—1. <i>The four Characters learned by Marco, what?</i> 2. <i>Nature of his employment.</i>	
XVI.	HOW MARK RETURNED FROM THE MISSION WHEREON HE HAD BEEN SENT .. .. .	29
XVII.	HOW MESSER NICOLO, MESSER MAFFEO, AND MESSER MARCO, ASKED LEAVE OF THE GREAT KAAH TO GO THEIR WAY .. .. .	30
	NOTES.—1. <i>Risks to Foreigners on a change of Sovereign.</i> 2. <i>The Lady Bolgana.</i> 3. <i>Passage from Ramusie.</i>	
XVIII.	HOW THE TWO BROTHERS AND MESSER MARCO TOOK LEAVE OF THE GREAT KAAH, AND RETURNED TO THEIR OWN COUNTRY .. .. .	32
	NOTES.—1. <i>Mongol Royal Messengers.</i> 2. <i>Mongol communication with the King of England.</i> 3. <i>Medieval Ships of China.</i> 4. <i>Passage from China to Sumatra.</i> 5. <i>Mortality among the party.</i> 6. <i>The Lady Cogachin in Persian History.</i> 7. <i>Death of the Kaan.</i> 8. <i>The Princess of Manzi.</i>	

## BOOK FIRST.

*Account of Regions Visited or heard of on the Journey from the Lesser Armenia to the Court of the Great Kaan at Chaudu*

I.	HERE THE BOOK BEGINS; AND FIRST IT SPEAKS OF THE LESSER HERMENIA .. .. .	41
	NOTES.—1. <i>Little Armenia.</i> 2. <i>Meaning of Chasteaux.</i> 3. <i>Sickness of Cilician Coast.</i> 4. <i>The phrase "tra terre."</i>	

CHAP.	PAGE
II.—CONCERNING THE PROVINCE OF TURCOMANIA .. .. .	43
NOTES.—1. <i>Brutality of the people.</i> 2. <i>Application of name Turcomania.</i>	
III.—DESCRIPTION OF THE GREATER HERMENIA .. .. .	47
NOTES.—1. <i>Erzingan.</i> Buckrams, <i>what were they?</i> 2. <i>Erzurum.</i> 3. <i>Baidurt.</i> 4. <i>Ararat.</i> 5. <i>Oil wells of Baku.</i>	
IV.—OF GEORGIANIA AND THE KINGS THEREOF .. .. .	49
NOTES.—1. <i>Georgian Kings.</i> 2. <i>The Georgians.</i> 3. <i>The Iron Gates and Wall of Alexander.</i> 4. <i>Box forests.</i> 5. <i>Goshawks.</i> 6. <i>Fish Miracle.</i> 7. <i>Sea of Ghel or Ghelan.</i> 8. <i>Names of the Caspian, and Navigation thereon.</i>	
V.—OF THE KINGDOM OF MAUSUL .. .. .	57
NOTES.—1. <i>Atabeks of Mosul.</i> 2. <i>Nestorian and Jacobite Christians.</i> 3. <i>Mosulins.</i> 4. <i>The Kurds.</i> 5. <i>Mush and Mardin.</i>	
VI.—OF THE GREAT CITY OF BAUDAS, AND HOW IT WAS TAKEN .. .. .	60
NOTES.—1. <i>Baudas, or Baghdad.</i> 2. <i>Island of Kish.</i> 3. <i>Rasra.</i> 4. <i>Baldachins and other silk textures; Animal patterns.</i> 5. <i>Chronology.</i> 6. <i>The Death of the Khalif Mostâsim.</i>	
VII.—HOW THE CALIF OF BAUDAS TOOK COUNSEL TO SLAY ALL THE CHRISTIANS IN HIS LAND .. .. .	65
NOTES.—1. <i>Chronology.</i> 2. <i>“Des Registres et des Casses.”</i>	
VIII.—HOW THE CHRISTIANS WERE IN GREAT DISMAY BECAUSE OF WHAT THE CALIF HAD SAID .. .. .	66
NOTE.— <i>The word “cralantur.”</i>	
IX.—HOW THE ONE-EYED COBLER WAS DESIRED TO PRAY FOR THE CHRISTIANS .. .. .	67
X.—HOW THE PRAYER OF THE ONE-EYED COBLER CAUSED THE MOUNTAIN TO MOVE .. .. .	68
NOTE.— <i>The Mountain Miracle.</i>	
XI.—OF THE NOBLE CITY OF TAURIS .. .. .	70
NOTES.—1. <i>Tabriz.</i> 2. <i>Cremeser.</i> 3. <i>Traffic at Tabriz.</i> 4. <i>The Torizi.</i> 5. <i>Character of City and People.</i>	
XII.—OF THE MONASTERY OF SAINT BARSAMO ON THE BORDERS OF TAURIS .. .. .	72
NOTE.— <i>The Monastery of Barsauma.</i>	
XIII.—OF THE GREAT COUNTRY OF PERSIA; WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF THE THREE KINGS .. .. .	73
NOTES.—1. <i>Kala'a Atishparastân.</i> 2. <i>The Three Kings.</i>	
XIV.—HOW THE THREE KINGS RETURNED TO THEIR OWN COUNTRY .. .. .	75
NOTES.—1. <i>The three mystic Gifts.</i> 2. <i>The Worshipped Fire.</i> 3. <i>Sdvah and Avah.</i> 4. <i>The Legend in Mas'udi.</i> 5. <i>Embellishments of the Story of the Magi.</i>	

# CONTENTS OF VOL. I.

xix

CHAP.	PAGE
XV.—OF THE EIGHT KINGDOMS OF PERSIA, AND HOW THEY ARE NAMED .. .. .	78
NOTES.—1. <i>The Eight Kingdoms.</i> 2. <i>Export of Horses, and Prices.</i> 3. <i>Persian brigands.</i> 4. <i>Persian wine.</i>	
XVI.—CONCERNING THE GREAT CITY OF YASDI .. .. .	84
NOTES.—1. <i>Yezd.</i> 2. <i>Yezd to Kerman.</i> 3. <i>The Woods spoken of.</i>	
XVII.—CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF KERMAN .. .. .	86
NOTES.—1. <i>City and Province of Kerman.</i> 2. <i>Turquoises.</i> 3. <i>Ordanique or Indian Steel.</i> 4. <i>Manufactures of Kerman.</i> 5. <i>Falcons.</i>	
XVIII.—OF THE CITY OF CAMADI AND ITS RUINS; ALSO TOUCHING THE KARAKUNA ROBBERS .. .. .	91
NOTES.—1. <i>Products of the warmer plains.</i> 2. <i>Humped oxen and fat-tailed sheep.</i> 3. <i>Scorail.</i> 4. <i>The Karakunals and Nigardarian Bands.</i> 5. <i>Camoadi.</i>	
XIX.—OF THE DESCENT TO THE CITY OF HORMOS .. .. .	101
NOTES.—1. <i>Site of Old Hormuz and Geography of the Route from Kerman to Hormuz.</i> 2. <i>Dates and Fish Pond.</i> 3. <i>Stitched Vassals.</i> 4. <i>One rudder, why noticed a few years.</i> 5. <i>Great heat at Hormuz.</i> 6. <i>The Soudan.</i> 7. <i>History of Hormuz, and Pili's Kuemidin Armat.</i> 8. <i>Second Point between Hamuz and Kerman.</i>	
XX.—OF THE WEARISOME AND DESERT ROAD THAT HAS NOW TO BE TRAVELLED .. .. .	105
NOTES.—1. <i>Desert of Ist.</i> 2. <i>Subterraneous Canals.</i>	
XXI.—CONCERNING THE CITY OF COBINAN AND THE THINGS THAT ARE MADE THERE .. .. .	117
NOTES.—1. <i>Koh-Bandin.</i> 2. <i>Production of Tuba.</i>	
XXII.—OF A CERTAIN DESERT THAT CONTINUES FOR EIGHT DAYS' JOURNEY .. .. .	119
NOTES.—1. <i>Deserts of Kherasan.</i> 2. <i>The Arbre Sol or Arbre Sec.</i>	
XXIII.—CONCERNING THE OLD MAN OF THE MOUNTAIN .. .. .	132
NOTES.—1. <i>The Assassins, Hashishin, or Mulikhidah.</i> 2. <i>Apparent allusion in Boccaccio to this story.</i>	
XXIV.—HOW THE OLD MAN USED TO TRAIN HIS ASSASSINS .. .. .	134
NOTES.—1. <i>The story widely spread. Notable murders by the Sectaries.</i> 2. <i>Their different branches.</i>	
XXV.—HOW THE OLD MAN CAME BY HIS END .. .. .	138
NOTE.— <i>History of the Destruction of the Sect by Hulaku. Castles of Alamut and Girdkuh.</i>	
XXVI.—CONCERNING THE CITY OF SAPURGAN .. .. .	140
NOTE.— <i>Shabrgan, and the route followed. Dried Melons.</i>	

CHAP.	PAGE
XXVII.—OF THE CITY OF BALC .. .. .	142
NOTES.—1. <i>Balkh.</i> 2. <i>Country meant by Dogana.</i> 3. <i>Lions in the Oxus Valley.</i>	
XXVIII.—OF TAICAN, AND THE MOUNTAINS OF SALT. ALSO OF THE PROVINCE OF CASEM .. .. .	144
NOTES.—1. <i>Talikan.</i> 2. <i>Mines of Rock-salt.</i> 3. <i>Ethnological characteristics.</i> 4. <i>Kishm.</i> 5. <i>Porcupines.</i> 6. <i>Old Capital of Badakhshan.</i> 7. <i>New Capital.</i>	
XXIX.—OF THE PROVINCE OF BADASHAN .. .. .	149
NOTES.—1. <i>Dialects of Badakhshan.</i> 2. <i>Alexandrian lineage of the Princes.</i> 3. <i>Badakhshan and the Balas Ruby.</i> 4. <i>Aure Mines.</i> 5. <i>Naked barley.</i> 6. <i>Wild sheep.</i> 7. <i>Scarcity of Badakhshan.</i> 8. <i>Repeated devastation of the Country from War.</i> 9. <i>Amplitude of feminine garments.</i>	
XXX.—OF THE PROVINCE OF PASHAI .. .. .	155
NOTE.— <i>On the country intended by this name?</i>	
XXXI.—OF THE PROVINCE OF KESHIMUR .. .. .	157
NOTES.—1. <i>Kashmir language.</i> 2. <i>Kashmir Conjurors.</i> 3. <i>Importance of Kashmir in History of Buddhism.</i> 4. <i>Character of the People.</i> 5. <i>Vicissitudes of Buddhism in Kashmir.</i> 6. <i>Buddhist practice as to slaughter of animals.</i> 7. <i>Coral.</i>	
XXXII.—OF THE GREAT RIVER OF BADASHAN; AND PLAIN OF PAMIER .. .. .	162
NOTES.—1. <i>The Upper Oxus and Wakhan.</i> 2. <i>The title Nono.</i> 3. <i>The Plateau of Pamer.</i> 4. <i>The Great Wild Sheep.</i> 5. <i>Fire at great altitudes.</i> 6. <i>Bolor.</i>	
XXXIII.—OF THE KINGDOM OF CASCAR .. .. .	169
NOTE.— <i>Kashgar.</i>	
XXXIV.—OF THE GREAT CITY OF SAMARCAN .. .. .	170
NOTES.—1. <i>Christians in Samarkand.</i> 2. <i>Chagatai's relation to Kublai mis-stated.</i> 3. <i>The Miracle of the Stone.</i>	
XXXV.—OF THE PROVINCE OF YARCAN .. .. .	173
NOTE.— <i>Yarkand.</i> 2. <i>Gottre prevalent there.</i>	
XXXVI.—OF A PROVINCE CALLED COTAN .. .. .	173
NOTES.—1. <i>"Adoration of Mahomet."</i> 2. <i>Khotan.</i>	
XXXVII.—OF THE PROVINCE OF PEIN .. .. .	175
NOTES.—1. <i>Position of Pein.</i> 2. <i>The Yu or Jade.</i> 3. <i>Temporary marriages.</i>	
XXXVIII.—OF THE PROVINCE OF CHARCHAN .. .. .	178
NOTE.— <i>Position of Charchan and Lop.</i>	
XXXIX.—OF THE CITY OF LOP, AND THE GREAT DESERT .. .. .	180
NOTES.—1. <i>Geographical discrepancy.</i> 2. <i>Superstitions as to Deserts; their wide diffusion.</i> 3. <i>The Sound of Drums in certain sandy acclivities.</i>	

# CONTENTS OF VOL. I.

xxi

CHAP.	PAGE
XL.—CONCERNING THE GREAT PROVINCE OF TANGUT ..	184
NOTES.—1. <i>Tangut.</i> 2. <i>Buddhism encountered here.</i> 3. <i>Kalmak superstition, the "Heaven's Ram."</i> 4. <i>Chinese customs described here.</i> 5. <i>Mongol disposal of the Dead.</i> 6. <i>Superstitious practice of avoiding to carry out the dead by the house-door; its wide diffusion.</i>	
XLI.—OF THE PROVINCE OF CAMUL .. .. .	189
NOTES.—1. <i>Kamul.</i> 2. <i>Character of the people.</i> 3. <i>Shameless custom.</i> 4. <i>Parallel.</i>	
XLII.—OF THE PROVINCE OF CHINGINTAIAS .. .. .	191
NOTES.—1. <i>The Country intended.</i> 2. <i>Asbestos Mountain.</i> 3. <i>The four Elements.</i> 4. and 5. <i>The Story of the Salamander. Asbestos fabrics.</i>	
XLIII.—OF THE PROVINCE OF SUKHUR .. .. .	195
NOTES.—1. <i>Explanatory.</i> 2. <i>The City of Sukchau.</i> 3. <i>Rhubarb country.</i> 4. <i>Poisonous Pasture.</i>	
XLIV.—OF THE CITY OF CAMPICHU .. .. .	197
NOTES.—1. <i>The City of Kanchau.</i> 2. <i>Reverence in Buddhas.</i> 3. <i>Buddhist Day of Special Worship.</i> 4. <i>Matrimonial customs.</i> 5. <i>Taxial.</i>	
XLV.—OF THE CITY OF EFZINA .. .. .	202
NOTES.—1. <i>Position of Yelma.</i> 2. <i>Taxial.</i> 3. <i>The Wild Ass of Mongolia.</i>	
XLVI.—OF THE CITY OF CARACOLON .. .. .	203
NOTES.—1. <i>Korabrum.</i> 2. <i>Chauca.</i> 3. <i>Prester John.</i>	
XLVII.—ON CHINGHIS, AND HOW HE BECAME THE FIRST KAAN OF THE TARTARS .. .. .	209
NOTES.—1. <i>Chronology.</i> 2. <i>Relations between Chinghis and Aung Khan, the Prester John of Persia.</i>	
XLVIII.—HOW CHINGHIS MUSTERED HIS PEOPLE TO MARCH AGAINST PRESTER JOHN .. .. .	211
XLIX.—HOW PRESTER JOHN MARCHED TO MEET CHINGHIS..	212
NOTES.—1. <i>Plain of Tinduc.</i> 2. <i>Discussion by Poise and Arrows.</i>	
L.—THE BATTLE BETWEEN CHINGHIS KAAN AND PRESTER JOHN. DEATH OF CHINGHIS .. .. .	215
NOTE.— <i>Real circumstances and date of the Death of Chinghis.</i>	
LI.—OF THOSE WHO DID REIGN AFTER CHINGHIS KAAN, AND OF THE CUSTOMS OF THE TARTARS .. .. .	216
NOTES.—1. <i>Origin of the Cambuscan of Chaucer.</i> 2. <i>Historical errors.</i> 3. <i>The Place of Sepulture of Chinghis.</i> 4. <i>Barbarous Funeral Superstition.</i>	
LII.—CONCERNING THE CUSTOMS OF THE TARTARS .. .. .	219
NOTES.—1. <i>Tartar Huts.</i> 2. <i>Tartar Waggon.</i> 3. <i>Pharaoh's Rat.</i> 4. <i>Chastity of the Women.</i> 5. <i>Polygamy and Marriage Customs.</i>	

CHAP.	PAGE
LIII.—CONCERNING THE GOD OF THE TARTARS .. .. .	224
NOTES.—1. <i>The old Tartar idols.</i> 2. <i>Kumiz.</i>	
LIV.—CONCERNING THE TARTAR CUSTOMS OF WAR .. .. .	228
NOTES.—1. <i>Tartar Arms.</i> 2. <i>The Decimal Division of their Troops.</i>	
3. <i>Textual.</i> 4. <i>Blood-drinking.</i> 5. <i>Kurút, or Tartar Curd.</i>	
6. <i>The Mongol military rapidity and terrorism.</i> 7. <i>Corruption of their Nomade simplicity.</i>	
LV.—CONCERNING THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE AMONG THE TARTARS .. .. .	234
NOTES.—1. <i>The Cudgel.</i> 2. <i>Punishment of Theft.</i> 3. <i>Marriage of the Dead.</i> 4. <i>Textual.</i>	
LVI.—SUNDRY PARTICULARS OF THE PLAIN BEYOND CARACORON .. .. .	236
NOTES.—1. <i>Textual.</i> 2. <i>Bargu, the Meerit, the Reindeer, and Chase of Water-fowl.</i> 3. <i>The bird Barguerlac, the Syrrhaptas.</i> 4. <i>Gerfalcons.</i>	
LVII.—OF THE KINGDOM OF ERGUUL, AND PROVINCE OF SINJU .. .. .	241
NOTES.—1. <i>Erguul.</i> 2. <i>Siningfu.</i> 3. <i>The Yak.</i> 4. <i>The Musk Deer.</i> 5. <i>The Reeves's Pheasant.</i>	
LVIII.—OF THE KINGDOM OF EGRIGAIA .. .. .	247
NOTES.—1. <i>Egrigaia</i> 2. <i>Calachan.</i> 3. <i>White Camels, and Camels, Sâlatoun.</i>	
LIX.—CONCERNING THE PROVINCE OF TENDUC, AND THE DESCENDANTS OF PRESTER JOHN .. .. .	249
NOTES.—1. <i>The name and place Tenduc. King George.</i> 2. <i>Standing Marriage Compact. The title Gurgân.</i> 3. <i>Azure.</i> 4. <i>The terms Argon and Guasmul. The Dungeons.</i> 5. <i>The Rampart of Gog and Magog.</i> 6. <i>Tartary cloths.</i> 7. <i>Sitankwaifu.</i>	
LX.—CONCERNING THE KAAH'S PALACE OF CHAGANNOR .. .. .	260
NOTES.—1. <i>The word Sesnes.</i> 2. <i>Chagan-nor.</i> 3. <i>The five species of Crane described by Polo.</i> 4. <i>The word Cator.</i>	
LXI.—OF THE CITY OF CHANDU, AND THE KAAH'S PALACE THERE .. .. .	263
NOTES.—1. <i>Chandu, properly Shangtu.</i> 2. <i>The Bamboo Palace. Uses of the Bamboo.</i> 3. <i>Kublai's Annual Migration to Shangtu.</i> 4. <i>The White Horses. The Oirad Tribe.</i> 5. <i>The Mare's Milk Festival.</i> 6. <i>Weather Conjuring.</i> 7. <i>Ascription of Cannibalism to Tibetans, &amp;c.</i> 8. <i>The term Bacsi.</i> 9. <i>Magical Feats ascribed to the Lamas.</i> 10. <i>Vast extent of Lama Convents.</i> 11. <i>Married Lamas.</i> 12. <i>Patarins.</i> 13. <i>The Ascetics called Sensin.</i>	

BOOK SECOND.

PART I.

CHAP.	PAGE
I.—OF CUBLAY KAAH, THE GREAT KAAH NOW REIGNING, AND OF HIS GREAT PUISSANCE .. .. .	295
NOTE.— <i>Eulogies of Kublai.</i>	
II.—CONCERNING THE REVOLT OF NAYAN, WHO WAS UNCLE TO THE GREAT KAAH CUBLAY .. .. .	296
NOTES.—1. <i>Chronology.</i> 2. <i>Kublai's Age.</i> 3. <i>His Wars.</i> 4. <i>Nayan, and his true relationship to Kublai.</i>	
III.—HOW THE GREAT KAAH MARCHED AGAINST NAYAN .. .. .	298
NOTE.— <i>Addition from Ruzsai.</i>	
IV.—OF THE BATTLE THAT THE GREAT KAAH FOUGHT WITH NAYAN .. .. .	300
NOTES.—1. <i>The word Buctsche.</i> 2. <i>Exekandev.</i> 3. <i>The Nakkara.</i> 4. <i>Parallel Passages.</i> 5. <i>Edible.</i> 6. <i>The Story of Nayan.</i>	
V.—HOW THE GREAT KAAH CALLED NAYAN TO BE PUT TO DEATH .. .. .	306
NOTES.—1. <i>The Shedding of Royal Blood in China.</i> 2. <i>Chorchu, Kuch, Bardsuk, Sekintung.</i> 3. <i>Joos in China.</i>	
VI.—HOW THE GREAT KAAH WENT BACK TO THE CITY OF CAMBALUC .. .. .	309
NOTE.— <i>Passage from Kamassie respecting the Khan's views of Religion. Remarks.</i>	
VII.—HOW THE KAAH REWARDED THE VALOUR OF HIS CAPTAINS .. .. .	312
NOTES.—1. <i>Parallel from Sanang Setzen.</i> 2. <i>The Golden Honorary Tablets or Patrah of the Mongols.</i> 3. <i>Umbrellas.</i> 4. <i>The Gergukou Tablets.</i>	
VIII.—CONCERNING THE PERSON OF THE GREAT KAAH .. .. .	318
NOTES.—1. <i>Colour of his Eyes.</i> 2. <i>His Wives.</i> 3. <i>The Kungurat Tribe.</i> 4. <i>Competitive Examination in Beauty.</i>	
IX.—CONCERNING THE GREAT KAAH'S SONS .. .. .	321
NOTES.—1. <i>Kublai's intended Heir.</i> 2. <i>His other Sons.</i>	
X.—CONCERNING THE PALACE OF THE GREAT KAAH .. .. .	324
NOTES.—1. <i>The word Tarcasci.</i> 2. <i>Arsenals of the Palace.</i> 3. <i>The Gates.</i> 4. <i>Various Readings.</i> 5. <i>Wide diffusion of the kind of Palace here described.</i> 6. <i>Parallel description.</i> 7. <i>Modern account of the Lake, &amp;c.</i> 8. <i>"Rose de l'aqur."</i> 9. <i>The Green Mount.</i> 10. <i>Textual.</i>	



CHAP.	PAGE
XI.—CONCERNING THE CITY OF CAMBALUC .. ..	331
NOTES.—1. <i>Chronology, &amp;c. of Peking.</i> 2. <i>The City Wall.</i> 3. <i>Changes in the extent of the City.</i> 4. <i>Its ground plan.</i> 5. <i>Alarm Towers.</i> 6. <i>Uncasiness of the Mongol rulers respecting the Chinese.</i>	
XII.—HOW THE GREAT KAA <sup>n</sup> MAINTAINS A GUARD OF TWELVE THOUSAND HORSE, WHICH ARE CALLED KESHICAN .. ..	336
NOTE.— <i>The term Quescican.</i>	
XIII.—THE FASHION OF THE GREAT KAA <sup>n</sup> 'S TABLE AT HIS HIGH FEASTS .. ..	338
NOTES.—1. <i>Order of the Tables.</i> 2. <i>The word Vernique.</i> 3. <i>The Buffet of Liquors.</i> 4. <i>The superstition of the Threshold.</i> 5. <i>Chinese Etiquettes.</i> 6. <i>Jugglers at the Banquet.</i>	
XIV.—CONCERNING THE GREAT FEAST HELD BY THE GRAND KAA <sup>n</sup> EVERY YEAR ON HIS BIRTHDAY .. ..	343
NOTES.—1. <i>The Chinese Year.</i> 2. <i>"Beaten Gold."</i> 3. <i>Textual. Festal changes of costume.</i>	
XV.—OF THE GREAT FESTIVAL WHICH THE KAA <sup>n</sup> HOLDS ON NEW YEAR'S DAY .. ..	346
NOTES.—1. <i>The White Month.</i> 2. <i>Mystic value of the number 9.</i> 3. <i>Elephants at Peking.</i> 4. <i>Adoration of Tablets. Kow-tow.</i>	
XVI.—CONCERNING THE TWELVE THOUSAND BARONS WHO RECEIVE ROBES OF CLOTH OF GOLD FROM THE EMPEROR ON THE GREAT FESTIVALS, THIRTEEN CHANGES A-PIECE .. ..	349
NOTES.—1. <i>Textual.</i> 2. <i>The words Camut and Borgal.</i> 3. <i>Time Lions.</i>	
XVII.—HOW THE GREAT KAA <sup>n</sup> ENJOINETH HIS PEOPLE TO SUPPLY HIM WITH GAME .. ..	352
NOTE.— <i>Parallel Passage.</i>	
XVIII.—OF THE LIONS AND LEOPARDS AND WOLVES THAT THE KAA <sup>n</sup> KEEPS FOR THE CHASE .. ..	353
NOTES.—1. <i>The Cheeta or Hunting Leopard.</i> 2. <i>Lynxes.</i> 3. <i>The Tiger, termed Lion by Polo.</i> 4. <i>The Baskit Eagle.</i>	
XIX.—CONCERNING THE TWO BROTHERS WHO HAVE CHARGE OF THE KAA <sup>n</sup> 'S HOUNDS .. ..	356
NOTE.— <i>The Masters of the Hounds, and their title.</i>	
XX.—HOW THE EMPEROR GOES ON A HUNTING EXPEDI- TION .. ..	357
NOTES.—1. <i>Direction of the Tour.</i> 2. <i>Hawking Establishments.</i> 3. <i>The word Toskail.</i> 4. <i>The word Bularguchi.</i> 5. <i>Kublai's Litter.</i> 6. <i>Kachar Madun.</i> 7. <i>The Kaan's Great Tents.</i> 8. <i>The Sable and Ermine.</i> 9. <i>Pétinde la Croix.</i>	

# CONTENTS OF VOL. I.

XXV

CHAP.	PAGE
XXI.—HOW THE GREAT KAAN, ON RETURNING FROM HIS HUNTING EXPEDITION, HOLDS A GREAT COURT AND ENTERTAINMENT .. .. .	365
NOTE.— <i>This chapter peculiar to the 2nd Type of MSS.</i>	
XXII.—CONCERNING THE CITY OF CAMBALUC, AND ITS GREAT TRAFFIC AND POPULATION .. .. .	367
NOTES.—1. <i>Suburbs of Peking.</i> 2. <i>The word Fondaco.</i>	
XXIII.—[CONCERNING THE OPPRESSIONS OF ACHMATH THE BAILO, AND THE PLOT THAT WAS FORMED AGAINST HIM] .. .. .	370
NOTES.—1. <i>Chapter peculiar to Ramusio.</i> 2. <i>Kublai's Administration.</i> 3. <i>The Rise of Ahmad.</i> 4. <i>The term Bailo.</i> 5. <i>The Conspiracy against Ahmad as related by Gaubil from the Chinese.</i> 6. <i>Murad's presence and upright conduct commemorated in the Chinese Annals.</i> 7. <i>The Kaan's practice against Mahomedans.</i>	
XXIV.—HOW THE GREAT KAAN CAUSETH THE BARK OF TREES, MADE INTO SOMETHING LIKE PAPER, TO PASS FOR MONEY OVER ALL HIS COUNTRY .. .. .	378
NOTE.— <i>Chinese Paper Currency.</i>	
XXV.—CONCERNING THE TWELVE BARONS WHO ARE SET OVER ALL THE AFFAIRS OF THE GREAT KAAN .. .. .	385
NOTE.— <i>The Monarchs of the Mongol Dynasties.</i> 1. <i>The term Sing.</i>	
XXVI.—HOW THE KAAN'S POSTS AND RUNNERS ARE SPED THROUGH MANY LANDS AND PROVINCES .. .. .	388
NOTES.—1. <i>Tartary.</i> 2. <i>Tatars of Yam.</i> 3. <i>Government Hostels.</i> 4. <i>Post-houses and Stations.</i> 5. <i>Post Extraordinary.</i> 6. <i>Distances of the Posts.</i> 7. <i>Antiquity of Posts in China, &amp;c.</i>	
XXVII.—HOW THE EMPEROR BESTOWS HELP ON HIS PEOPLE, WHEN THEY ARE AFFLICTED WITH DEARTH OR MURRAIN .. .. .	393
NOTE.— <i>Kublai's commissions, and justice.</i>	
XXVIII.—HOW THE GREAT KAAN CAUSES TREES TO BE PLANTED BY THE HIGHWAY .. .. .	394
XXIX.—CONCERNING THE RICE-WINE DRUNK BY THE PEOPLE OF CATHAY .. .. .	394
NOTE.— <i>Rice wine.</i>	
XXX.—CONCERNING THE BLACK STONES THAT ARE DUG IN CATHAY, AND ARE BURN'T FOR FUEL .. .. .	395
NOTE.— <i>Consumption of Coal in China.</i>	
XXXI.—HOW THE GREAT KAAN CAUSES STORES OF CORN TO BE MADE, TO HELP HIS PEOPLE WITHAL IN TIME OF DEARTH .. .. .	396
NOTE.— <i>The Chinese Public Granaries.</i>	

CHAP.	PAGE
XXXII.—OF THE CHARITY OF THE EMPEROR TO THE POOR ..	397
NOTE.— <i>Buddhist influence, and Chinese charities.</i>	
XXXIII.—[CONCERNING THE ASTROLOGERS IN THE CITY OF CAMBALUC] .. .. .	399
NOTES.—1. <i>The word Tacuin. The Chinese Almanacs.</i> 2. <i>The Chinese and Mongol Cycle.</i>	
XXXIV.—[CONCERNING THE RELIGION OF THE CATHAYANS; THEIR VIEWS AS TO THE SOUL; AND THEIR CUSTOMS] .. .. .	404
NOTES.—1. <i>Textual.</i> 2. <i>Do.</i> 3. <i>Exceptions to the general charge</i> ● <i>of Irreligion brought against the Chinese.</i> 4. <i>Politeness.</i> 5. <i>Filial Piety.</i>	

# EXPLANATORY LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS TO VOLUME I.

## INSERTED PLATES AND MAPS.

- To face Title. . . DOORWAY of the HOUSE of MARCO POLO in the Corte Sabionera at Venice (see p. lviii). Woodcut from a drawing by Signor L. Rosso, Venice.
- „ page c. Reduced FACSIMILE of the WILL of MARCO POLO, preserved in St. Mark's Library. On half the scale of the original. Photolithography, from a negative taken under the superintendence of Cavaliere G. Berchet.
- „ „ cviii. FACSIMILE of Handwriting from the CRUSCA ITALIAN MS. of Polo's Book, and of the indorsement upon it. Lithograph from a tracing by the Editor.
- „ „ cxxxiv. Probable view of MARCO POLO'S OWN GEOGRAPHY: a Map of the World, formed as far as possible from the Traveller's own data. Drawn by the Editor.
- „ „ 1. Marco Polo's Itineraries, No. I. WESTERN ASIA.
- „ „ 6. Map illustrating the geographical position of the CITY of SARAI.
- „ „ 6. Plan of part of the remains of the same city. Reduced from a Russian plan published by M. Grigorieff.
- „ „ 28. Reduced FACSIMILE of part of the BUDDHIST INSCRIPTION of the Mongol Era, on the Archway at KEE-YUNG-KWAN in the Pass of Naukau, north-west of Peking, showing four of the characters in use under the Mongol Dynasty. Photolithograph from original impressions taken by, and in the possession of, Mr. A. Wylie. See an Article by Mr. Wylie in the *J. R. A. S. for 1870*, p. 14.
- „ „ 41. Plan of AYAS, the Laras of Polo. From an Admiralty Chart.
- „ „ 41. Plan of position of DELAWAR, the supposed site of the Dilavar of Polo. Ext. from a Survey by Lt.-Col. D. G. Robinson, R.E.
- „ „ 108. Marco Polo's Itineraries, No. II. Routes between KERMAN and HORMUZ.
- „ „ 108. Do. do. No. III. Regions on and near the UPPER OXUS.
- „ „ 316. "Table d'Or de Compiement;" the PAIZA of the MONGOLS, from a specimen found in Siberia. Reduced to one-half the scale of the original, from an engraving in a Paper by I. J. Schmidt, in the *Bulletin de la Classe historico-philologique de l'Acad. imp. des Sciences, St.-Petersbourg*, tom. iv. No. 9.
- „ „ 332. Plan of PEKING as it is, and as it was about A.D. 1290.
- „ „ 378. BANK-NOTE of the MING Dynasty, on one-half the scale of the original. Reduced from a genuine note in the possession of W. Lockhart, Esq., F.R.G.S. N.B.—The facsimile is as exact as could be effected, with these exceptions: (1) that the colour of the original is considerably darker; (2) that the vermilion seal-impressions, of which only the slightest traces remained, have been restored from other sources.
- „ „ 384. Facsimile of a MODERN Peking BANK-NOTE; from a specimen in the possession of Mr. Lockhart.
- „ last page Marco Polo's Itineraries, No. IV. EASTERN ASIA.

## WOODCUTS PRINTED WITH THE TEXT.

## INTRODUCTORY NOTICES.

- Page xl. Arms of the Polo family, according to Marco Barbùro.
- „ xlviii. The Piazzetta at Venice in the 14th century. From the Frontispiece Miniature of the MS. of Marco Polo in the Bodleian. (Borrowed from the *National Miscellany*, published by J. H. Parker, Oxford, for 1853-55, and see *Street's Brick and Marble*, &c., 1855, p. 150-151.)
- „ lvi. Three extracts from maps of Venice, showing the site of the Ca' Polo at three different periods. (1) From the great woodcut Map or View of Venice, dated 1500, and commonly called Albert Dürer's. (2) From a Plan by Cav. Lodovico Ughi, 1729. (3) From the Modern Official Plan of the City.
- „ lxii. Extract from a fresco by Spinello Aretini, in the Municipal Palace at Siena, representing a galley-fight between the Venetians and the fleet of the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, and illustrating the arrangements of medieval galleys. Drawn from a very dim and imperfect photograph, after personal inspection of the original.
- „ lxiv. Diagram of arrangement of oars in galleys.
- „ lxvi. Extract from a picture by Domenico Tintoretto in the Ducal Palace at Venice, representing the same galley-fight. After an engraving in the *Theatrum Vinctum*.
- „ lxxvii. Marco Polo's Galley going into action at Curzola. Drawn by Signor Q. Cenni, 15 Viâ S. Antonio, Milan, from a design by the Editor.
- „ lxxviii. Map to illustrate the sea-fight at Curzola, where Marco Polo was taken prisoner.
- „ lxxxv. Seal of the Pisan Prisoners in Genoa, after the battle of Meloria (1284). From *Manni, Osservazioni Storiche sopra Sigilli Antichi*, tom. xii.
- „ cii. The Convent and Church of S. Lorenzo, the burial-place of Marco Polo, as it existed in the 15th century. From the Map of 1500 (see above).
- „ ciii. Figure of Marco Polo, from the first printed edition of his Book, published in German at Nuremberg, 1477. Traced from a copy in the Berlin Library.
- „ cxliii. Tailed Star near the Antarctic, as Marco Polo drew it for Pietro d' Abano. From the *Conciliator* of Pietro d' Abano.

## PROLOGUE.

- Page 3. Remains of the castle of Soldaia or Sudák. After *Dubois de Montpereux, Voyage autour du Caucase*, Atlas, 3d s. Pl. 64.
- „ 7. Ruins of Bolghar. After *Demidoff, Voyage dans la Russie méridionale*, Pl. 75.
- „ 14. The Great Kaan delivering a golden tablet to the two elder Polos. From a miniature in the *Livre des Merveilles du Monde* (Fr. 2810) in the Library at Paris, fol. 3 verso.
- „ 16. Castle of Ayas. After *Langlois, Voyage en Cilicie*.
- „ 17. Plan of Acre as it was when lost (A.D. 1291). Reduced and translated from the contemporary plan in the *Secreta Fidalium Crucis* of Marino Sanuto the Elder, engraved in *Hongurs, Gesta Dei per Francos*, vol. ii.

- Page 20. Portrait of Pope Gregory X. After *J. B. de Cavaleriis Pontificum Romanorum Effigies, &c.* Romæ, 1580.  
 „ 27. Ancient Chinese war-vessel. From the Chinese Encyclopædia called *San-Chai-Thou-Hoei*.

## BOOK FIRST.

- Page 42. Coin of King Hethum I. and Queen Isabel of Little Armenia. From an original in the British Museum.  
 „ 48. Castle of Baiburt. After *Texier, L'Arménie*, Pl. 3.  
 „ 53. View of Derbend. After a cut from a drawing by M. Moynet in the *Tour du Monde*, vol. I.  
 „ 58. Coin of Badraddin Lolo of Mosul (A.H. 620). After *Marsden's Numismata Orientalia*, No. 164.  
 „ 71. Ghazan Khan's Mosque at Tabriz. Borrowed from *Fergusson's History of Architecture*.  
 „ 90. Kashmir scarf with animals, &c. After photograph from the scarf in the India Museum.  
 „ 111. Illustrations of the use of the double rudder in the Middle Ages. 6 figures, viz., Nos. 1 and 2, from *Perte, Scriptures*, tom. xviii. after a Genoese Chronicle; No. 3, Sketch from fresco of Spinello Aretini at Siena; No. 4, Seal of Port of Winchilsea, from *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, vol. i. 1848; No. 5, Sculpture on Leaning Tower at Pisa, after *Jal, Archéologie Navale*; No. 6, from the Monument of Peter Martyr, the persecutor of the Lombard *Patarini*, in the church of St. Eustorgius at Milan, after *Le Tombe ed i Monumenti Illustri d'Italia*, Mil. 1822-23.  
 „ 127. The *Arbre Sec*, and *Arbres du Soleil et de la Lune*. From a miniature in the Prose Romance of Alexander, in the B. Museum MS. called the *Shrewsbury Book* (Reg. xv. c. 6).  
 „ 131. The Chinâr or Oriental Plane, viz., that called the Tree of Godfrey of Boulogne at Buyukdéré, near Constantinople. Borrowed from *Le Monde Végétal* of Fiquier.  
 „ 158. Ancient Buddhist Temple at Pandrethan in Kashmir. Borrowed from *Fergusson's History of Architecture*.  
 „ 167. Horns of the *Ovis Poli*, or Great Sheep of Pamer. Drawn by the Editor from the specimen belonging to the Royal Asiatic Society.  
 „ 200. Great Lama Monastery, viz., that at Jehol. After *Staunton's Narrative of Lord Macartney's Embassy*.  
 „ 203. The *Kyang*, or Wild Ass of Mongolia. After a plate by Wolf in the *Journal of the Royal Zoological Society*.  
 „ 223. Medieval Tartar Huts and Waggon. Drawn by Sig. Quinto Cenni, on a design compiled by the Editor from the descriptions of medieval and modern travellers.  
 „ 226. Tartar idols and Kumiz churn. Drawn by the Editor after data in Pallas and Zaleski.  
 „ 240. The *Syrhaptas Pallasii*; *Barcherlac* of Marco Polo. From a plate by Wolf in the *Ibis* for April, 1860.  
 „ 246. Reeves's Pheasant. After an engraving in *Wood's Illustrated Natural History*.  
 „ 258. The Rampart of Gog and Magog. From a photograph of the Great Wall of China. Borrowed from *Dr. Kennie's Peking and the Pekingers*.  
 „ 270. A Pavilion at Yuen Min Yuen, to illustrate the probable style of Kublai Khan's Summer Palace. Borrowed from *Mickel's Siberian Overland Route*.

- Page 281. Chinese Conjuring Extraordinary. Extracted from an engraving in *Edward Melton's Zeldnaame Reizen*, &c. Amsterdam, 1702.
- „ 284. A Monastery of Lamas. Borrowed from the *Tour du Monde*.
- „ 291. A Tibetan Bacci. Sketched from the life by the Editor.
- „ 303. Nakkaras. From a Chinese original in the *Lois des Empereurs Mandchoux* (*Thai-Thsing-Hoci-Tien-Thou*), in the Paris Library.
- „ 304. Nakkaras. After one of the illustrations to Blochmann's edition of the *Ain-i-Akhari*.
- „ 314. Seljukian coin, with the Lion and the Sun (A.H. 640). After Marsden's *Numismata Orientalia*, No. 98.
- „ 319. Portrait of the Great Kaan Kublai. From a Chinese engraving in the Encyclopædia called *San-Thsai-Thou-Hoei*; in the Paris Library.
- „ 329. The Winter Palace at Peking. Borrowed from *Ferguson's History of Architecture*.
- „ 330. Distant view of the "Green Mount." Borrowed from the *Tour du Monde*.
- „ 335. South gate of the "Imperial City" at Peking. From an original sketch belonging to *W. Lockhart, Esq.*
- „ 355. The Barkút Eagle. After *Atkinson's Oriental and Western Siberia*.
- „ 364. The tents of the Emperor Kienlung. From a drawing in the *Stanton Collection* in the British Museum.
- „ 369. Plain of Cambaluc; the City in the distance; from the hills on the north-west. From a photograph. Borrowed from *Dr. Rennie's Peking*.
- „ 402. Court of the Observatory at Peking, with ancient instruments of the Mongol era. Borrowed from the *Tour du Monde*.
- „ 409. Marble Archway at Keu-yung-kwan in the Nankau Pass. From a photograph lent by *W. Lockhart, Esq.*

# MARCO POLO AND HIS BOOK.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICES.





# MARCO POLO AND HIS BOOK.

## . INTRODUCTORY NOTICES.

### I. OBSCURITIES IN THE HISTORY OF HIS LIFE AND BOOK. RAMUSIO'S STATEMENTS.

1. WITH all the intrinsic interest of Marco Polo's Book, it may perhaps be doubted if it would have continued to exercise such fascination on many minds through successive generations were it not for the difficult questions which it suggests. It is a great book of puzzles, whilst our confidence in the man's veracity is such that we feel certain every puzzle has a solution.

Obscurities  
of Polo's  
Book, and  
personal  
History.

And such difficulties have not attached merely to the identification of places, the interpretation of outlandish terms, or the illustration of obscure customs; for strange entanglements have perplexed also the chief circumstances of the Traveller's life and authorship. The time of the dictation of his Book and of the execution of his Last Will have been almost the only undisputed epochs in his biography. The year of his birth has been contested, and the date of his death has not been recorded; the critical occasion of his capture by the Genoese, to which we seem to owe the happy fact that he did not go down mute to the tomb of his fathers, has been made the subject of chronological difficulties; there are in the various texts of his story variations hard to account for; the very tongue in which it was written down has furnished a question, solved only in our own age, and in a most unexpected manner.

2. The first person who attempted to gather and string the facts of Marco Polo's personal history was his countryman, the cel

of detail.

VOL. I.

veller were still rife in Venice, a genuine thread runs through it which could never have been spun in later days, and its presentation seems to me an essential element in any full discourse upon the subject.

Ramusio's preface to the Book of Marco Polo, which opens the second volume of his famous Collection of Voyages and Travels, and is addressed to his learned friend Jérôme Fracastoro, after referring to some of the most noted geographers of antiquity, proceeds :—

“Of all that I have named, Ptolemy, as the latest, possessed the greatest extent of knowledge. Thus, towards the North, his knowledge carries him beyond the Caspian, and he is aware of its being shut in all round like a lake,—a fact which was unknown in the days of Strabo and Pliny, though the Romans were already lords of the world. But though his knowledge extends so far, a tract of 15 degrees beyond that sea he can describe only as *Terra Incognita*; and towards the South he is fain to apply the same character to all beyond the Equinoxial. In these unknown regions, as regards the South, the first to make discoveries have been the Portuguese captains of our own age; but as regards the North and North-East the discoverer was the Magnifico Messer Marco Polo, an honoured nobleman of Venice, nearly 300 years since, as may be read more fully in his own Book. And in truth it makes one marvel to consider the immense extent of the journeys made, first by the Father and Uncle of the said Messer Marco, when they proceeded continually towards the East-North-East, all the way to the Court of the Great Can and the Emperor of the Tartars; and afterwards again by the three of them when, on their return homeward, they traversed the Eastern and Indian Seas. Nor is that all, for one marvels also how the aforesaid gentleman was able to give such an orderly description of all that he had seen; seeing that such an accomplishment was possessed by very few in his day, and he had had a large part of his nurture among those uncultivated Tartars, without any regular training in the art of composition. His Book indeed, owing to the endless errors and inaccuracies that had crept into it, had come for many years to be regarded as fabulous; and the opinion prevailed that the names of cities and provinces contained therein were all fictitious and imaginary, without any ground in fact, or were (I might rather say) mere dreams.

“3. Howbeit, during the last hundred years, persons acquainted with Persia have begun to recognize the existence of Cathay. The voyages of the Portuguese also towards the North-East, beyond the Golden Chersonese, have brought to knowledge many cities and provinces of India, and many islands likewise, with those very names which our Author applies to them; and again, on reaching the Land of China, they have ascertained from the people of that region (as we are told by Sign. John De Barros, a Portuguese gentleman, in his

Ramusio  
vindicates  
Polo's Geo-  
graphy.

\* The Preface is dated Venice, 7th July, 1553. Fracastorius died in the same year, and Ramusio erected a statue of him at Padua. Ramusio himself died in 1557.

Geography) that Canton, one of the chief cities of that kingdom, is in  $30\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  of latitude, with the coast running N.E. and S.W. ; that after a distance of 275 leagues, the said coast turns towards the N.W. ; and that there are three provinces along the sea-board, Mangi, Zanton, and Quinzai, the last of which is the principal city and the King's Residence, standing in  $46^{\circ}$  of latitude. And proceeding yet further the coast attains to  $50^{\circ}$ .\* Seeing then how many particulars are in our day becoming known of that part of the world concerning which Messer Marco has written, I have deemed it reasonable to publish his book, with the aid of several copies written (as I judge, more than 200 years ago, in a perfectly accurate form, and one vastly more faithful than that in which it has been heretofore read. And thus the world shall not lose the fruit that may be gathered from so much diligence and industry expended upon so honourable a branch of knowledge."

4. Ramusio, then, after a brief apologetic parallel of the marvels related by Polo with those related by the Ancients and by the modern discoverers in the West, such as Columbus and Cortes, proceeds :—

"And often in my own mind, comparing the land explorations of these our Venetian gentlemen with the sea explorations of the aforesaid Signor Don Christopher, I have asked myself which of the two were really the more marvellous. And if patriotic prejudice delude me not, methinks good reason might be adduced for setting the land journey above the sea voyage. Consider only what a height of courage was needed to undertake and carry through so difficult an enterprise, over a route of such desperate length and hardship, whereon it was sometimes necessary to carry food for the supply of man and beast, not for days only but for months together. Columbus, on the other hand, going by sea, readily carried with him all necessary provision, and after a voyage of some 30 or 40 days was conveyed by the wind whither he desired to go. The Venetians again took a whole year's time to pass all those great deserts and mighty rivers. Indeed that the difficulty of travelling to Cathay was so much greater than that of reaching the New World, and the route so much longer and more perilous, may be gathered from the fact that, since those gentlemen twice made this journey, no one from Europe has dared to repeat it,† whereas in the very year following the discovery of the Western Indies many ships immediately retraced the voyage thither, and up to the present day continue to do so, habitually and in countless numbers. Indeed those regions are now so well known, and so thronged by commerce, that the traffic between Italy, Spain, and England is not greater."

Ramusio  
compares  
Polo with  
Columbus.

5. Ramusio goes on to explain the light regarding the first part or prologue of Marco Polo's book that he had derived

\* The Geography of De Barros, from which this is quoted, has never been printed. The passage does not seem to occur in the Decades.

† A grievous error of Ramusio's.

from a recent piece of luck which had made him partially acquainted with the geography of Apulſeda, and to make a running commentary on the whole of the preliminary narrative until the final return of the travellers to Venice :—

Recounts a tradition of the traveller's return to Venice.

“And when they got thither the same fate befel them as befel Ulyſſes, who, when he returned, after his twenty years wanderings, to his native Ithaca, was recognized by nobody. Thus also those three gentlemen who had been so many years absent from their native city were recognized by none of their kinsfolk, who were under the firm belief that they had all been dead for many a year past, as indeed had been reported. Through the long duration and the hardships of their journeys, and through the many worries and anxieties that they had undergone, they were quite changed in aspect, and had got a certain indescribable smack of the Tartar both in air and accent, having indeed all but forgotten their Venetian tongue. Their clothes too were coarse and shabby, and of a Tartar cut. They proceeded on their arrival to their house in this city in the confine of St. John Chrysostom, where you may see it to this day. The house, which was in those days a very lofty and handsome palazzo, is now known by the name of the *Corte del Millioni* for a reason that I will tell you presently. Going thither they found it occupied by some of their relatives, and they had the greatest difficulty in making the latter understand who they should be. For these good people, seeing them to be in countenance so unlike what they used to be, and in dress so shabby, flatly refused to believe that they were those very gentlemen of the Ca' Polo whom they had been looking upon for ever so many years as among the dead. So these three gentlemen,—this is a story I have often heard when I was a youngster from the illustrious Messer GASPÀRO MALPIGRO, a gentleman of very great age, and a Senator of eminent virtue and integrity, whose house was on the Canal of Santa Marina, exactly at the corner over the mouth of the Rio di S. Giovanni Chrisostomo, and just midway among the buildings of the aforesaid Corte del Millioni, and he said he had heard the story from his own father and grandfather, and from other old men among the neighbours,—the three gentlemen, I say, devised a scheme by which they should at once bring about their recognition by their relatives, and secure the honourable notice of the whole city; and this was it :—

“They invited a number of their kindred to an entertainment, which they took care to have prepared with great state and splendour in that house of theirs; and when the hour arrived for sitting down to table they came forth of their chamber all three clothed in crimson satin, fashioned in long robes reaching to the ground, such as people in those days wore within doors. And when water for the hands had been served, and the guests were set, they took off those robes and put on others of crimson damask, whilst the first suits were by their orders cut up and divided among the servants. Then after partaking of some of the dishes they went out again and came back in robes of crimson velvet, and when they had again taken their seats, the second suits were divided as before. When dinner was over they did the like with the robes of velvet, after

they had put on dresses of the ordinary fashion worn by the rest of the company. These proceedings caused much wonder and amazement among the guests. But when the cloth had been drawn, and all the servants had been ordered to retire from the dining-hall, Messer Marco, as the youngest of the three, rose from table, and, going into another chamber, brought forth the three shabby dresses of coarse stuff which they had worn when they first arrived. Straightway they took sharp knives and began to rip up some of the seams and welts, and to take out of them jewels of the greatest value in vast quantities, such as rubies, sapphires, carbuncles, diamonds and emeralds, which had all been stitched up in those dresses in so artful a fashion that nobody could have suspected the fact. For when they took leave of the Great Can they had changed all the wealth that he had bestowed upon them into this mass of rubies, emeralds, and other jewels, being well aware of the impossibility of carrying with them so great an amount in gold over a journey of such extreme length and difficulty. Now this exhibition of such a huge treasure of jewels and precious stones, all tumbled out upon the table, threw the guests into fresh amazement, insomuch that they seemed quite bewildered and dumbfounded. And now they recognized that in spite of all former doubts these were in truth those honoured and worthy gentlemen of the Ca' Polo that they claimed to be; and so all paid them the greatest honour and reverence. And when the story got wind in Venice, straightway the whole city, gentle and simple, flocked to the house to embrace them, and to make much of them, with every conceivable demonstration of affection and respect. On Messer Maffio, who was the eldest, they conferred the honours of an office that was of great dignity in those days; whilst the young men came daily to visit and converse with the ever polite and gracious Messer Marco, and to ask him questions about Cathay and the Great Can, all which he answered with such kindly courtesy that every man felt himself in a manner in his debt. And as it happened that in the story, which he was constantly called on to repeat, of the magnificence of the Great Can, he would speak of his revenues as amounting to ten or fifteen *millions* of gold; and in like manner, when recounting other instances of great wealth in those parts, would always make use of the term *millions*, so they gave him the nickname of **MESSER MARCO MILLIONI**: a thing which I have noted also in the Public Books of this Republic where mention is made of him.\* The Court of his House, too, at S. Giovanni Chrisostomo, has always from that time been popularly known as the Court of the Million.

6. "Not many months after the arrival of the travellers at Venice, news came that **LAMPA DORIA**, Captain of the Genoese Fleet, had advanced with 70 galleys to the Island of Curzola, upon which orders were issued by the Prince of the Most Illustrious Signory for the arming of 90 galleys with all the expedition possible, and Messer Marco Polo for his valour was put in charge of one of these. So he with the others, under the command of the Most Illustrious Messer **ANDREA DANDOLO**, Procurator of St. Mark's, as Captain General

Recounts Marco's capture by the Genoese.

Council, which, on a late visit

to I was enabled to extract, through an  
See below, p. xcv.

a very brave and worthy gentleman, set out in search of the Genoese Fleet. They fought on the September feast of Our Lady, and, as is the common hazard of war, our fleet was beaten, and Polo was made prisoner. For, having pressed on in the vanguard of the attack, and fighting with high and worthy courage in defence of his country and his kindred, he did not receive due support, and being wounded, he was taken, along with Dandolo, and immediately put in irons and sent to Genoa.

"When his rare qualities and marvellous travels became known there, the whole city gathered to see him and to speak with him, and he was no longer entreated as a prisoner but as a dear friend and honoured gentleman. Indeed they showed him such honour and affection that at all hours of the day he was visited by the noblest gentlemen of the city, and was continually receiving presents of every useful kind. Messer Marco finding himself in this position, and witnessing the general eagerness to hear all about Cathay and the Great Can, which indeed compelled him daily to repeat his story till he was weary, was advised to put the matter in writing. So having found means to get a letter written to his father here at Venice, in which he desired the latter to send the notes and memoranda which he had brought home with him, after the receipt of these, and assisted by a Genoese gentleman, who was a great friend of his, and who took great delight in learning about the various regions of the world, and used on that account to spend many hours daily in the prison with him, he wrote this present book (to please him) in the Latin tongue.

"To this day the Genoese for the most part write what they have to write in that language, for there is no possibility of expressing their natural dialect with the pen.\* Thus then it came to pass that the Book was put forth at first by Messer Marco in Latin; but as many copies were taken, and as it was rendered into our vulgar tongue, all Italy became filled with it, so much was this story desired and run after."

7. "The captivity of Messer Marco greatly disturbed the minds of Messer Maffio and his father Messer Nicolo. They had decided, whilst still on their travels, that Marco should marry as soon as they should get to Venice; but now they found themselves in this unlucky pass, with so much wealth and nobody to inherit it. Fearing that Marco's imprisonment might endure for many years, or, worse still, that he might not live to quit it (for many assured them that numbers of Venetian prisoners had been kept in Genoa a score of years before obtaining liberty); seeing too no prospect of being able to ransom him,—a thing which they had attempted often and by various channels,—they took counsel together, and came to the conclusion that Messer Nicolo, who, old as he was, was still hale and vigorous, should take to himself a new wife. This he did; and at the end of four years he found himself the father of three sons, Stefano, Maffio, and Giovanni. Not many years after, Messer Marco aforesaid, through the great favour that he had acquired in the eyes of the first gentlemen of Genoa, and indeed of the whole city, was discharged from prison and set free. Returning home he found that his father had in the meantime had those

\* This rather preposterous skit at the Genoese dialect naturally excites a remonstrance from the Abate Spotorno (*Storia Letteraria della Liguria*, II. 217).

three other sons. Instead of taking this amiss, wise and discreet man that he was, he agreed also to take a wife of his own. He did so accordingly, but he never had any son, only two girls, one called Moreta and the other Fantina.

When at a later date his father died, like a good and dutiful son he caused to be erected for him a tomb of very honourable kind for those days, being a great sarcophagus cut from the solid stone, which to this day may be seen under the portico before the church of St. Lorenzo in this city, on the right hand as you enter, with an inscription denoting it to be the tomb of Messer Nicolo Polo of the contrada of S. Gio. Chrisostomo. The arms of his family consist of a *Bend* with three birds on it, and the colours, according to certain books of old histories in which you see all the coats of the gentlemen of this city emblazoned, are the field *azure*, the bend *argent*, and the three birds *sable*. These last are birds of that kind vulgarly termed *Pole*, or, as the Latins call them, *Graculi*.\*

8. "As regards the after duration of this noble and worthy family, I find that Messer Andrea Polo of San Felice had three sons, the first of whom was Messer Marco, the second Maffio, the third Nicolo. The two last were those who went to Constantinople first, and afterwards to Cathay, as has been seen. Messer Marco the elder being dead, the wife of Messer Nicolo who had been left at home with child, gave birth to a son, to whom she gave the name of Marco in memory of the deceased, and this is the Author of our Book. Of the brothers who were born from his father's second marriage, viz., Stephen, John, and Matthew, I do not find that any of them had children except Matthew. He had five sons and one daughter called Maria; and she, after the death of her brothers without offspring, inherited in 1417 all the property of her father and her brothers. She was honourably married to Messer AZZO TREVISANO of the parish of Santo Stazio in this city, and from her sprung the fortunate and honoured stock of the Illustrious Messer DOMENICO TREVISANO, Procurator of St. Mark's, and valorous Captain General of the Sea Forces of the Republic, whose virtue and singular good qualities are represented with augmentation in

Ramusio's  
account of  
the Family  
Polo and its  
termination

\* *Jackdaws* I believe, in spite of some doubt from the imbecility of ordinary dictionaries in such matters.

They are under this name made the object of a similitude by Dante (surely a most unhappy one) in reference to the resplendent spirits sitting on the celestial stairs in the sphere of Saturn:—

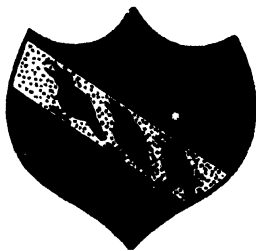
"E come per lo natural costume  
Le *Pole* insieme, al cominciar del giorno,  
Si muovono a scaldar le fredde piume;  
Poi altre vanno via senza ritorno,  
Altre rivolgon sè, onde non mosse,  
Ed altre roteando fan soggiorno."—*Parad.* XXI. 34

There is some difference among authorities as to the details of the Polo blazon. According to a MS. concerning the genealogies of Venetian families written by Marco Barbaro in 1566, and of which there is a copy in the Museo Civico, the field is *gules*, the bend *or*. And this I have followed in the cut. But a note by S. Stefani of Venice, with which I have been favoured since the cut was made, informs me that a fine fifteenth century MS. in his possession gives the field as *argent*, with no bend, and the three birds *sable* with beaks *gules*. Thus \*.



the person of the Most Illustrious Prince Ser MA<sup>CO</sup> ANTONIO TREVISANO, his son.\*

"Such has been the history of this noble family of the Ca' Polo, which lasted as we see till the year of our Redemption 1417, in which year died childless Marco Polo, the last of the five sons of Maffeo, and so it came to an end. Such be the chances and changes of human affairs!"



Arms of the Ca' Polo.

## II. SKETCH OF THE STATE OF THE EAST AT THE TIME OF THE JOURNEYS OF THE POLO FAMILY.

9. The story of the travels of the Polo family opens in 1260.

Christendom had recovered from the alarm into which it had been thrown some 18 years before when the Tartar cataclysm had threatened to engulf it. The Tartars themselves were already becoming an object of curiosity rather than of fear, and soon became an object of hope, as a possible help against the old Mahomedan foe. The frail Latin throne in Constantinople was still standing, but tottering to its fall. The successors of the Crusaders still held the Coast of Syria from Antioch to Jaffa, though a deadlier brood of enemies than they had yet encountered was now coming to maturity in the Dynasty of the Mamelukes. The jealousies of the commercial republics of Italy were daily waxing greater. The position of Genoese trade on the coasts of the Aegean was greatly depressed, by the predominance which Venice had acquired there by her part in the expulsion of the Greek Emperors, and which won for

\* Marco Antonio Trevisano was elected Doge 4th June, 1553, but died on the 31st of May following. We do not here notice Rainaldo's numerous errors, which will be corrected in the sequel.

## SKETCH OF THE STATE OF THE EAST.

the Doge the proud title of Lord of Three-Eighths of the Empire of Romania. But Genoa was biding her time for an early revenge, and year by year her naval strength and skill were increasing. Both these republics held possessions and establishments in the ports of Syria, which were often the scene of sanguinary conflicts between their citizens. Alexandria was still largely frequented in the intervals of war as the great emporium of Indian wares, but the facilities afforded by the Mongol conquerors who now held the whole tract from the Persian Gulf to the shores of the Caspian and of the Black Sea, or nearly so, were beginning to give a great advantage to the caravan routes which debouched at the ports of Cilician Armenia in the Mediterranean and at Trebizond on the Euxine. Tana (or Azov) had not as yet become the outlet of a similar traffic; the Venetians had apparently frequented to some extent the coast of the Crimea for local trade, but their rivals appear to have been in great measure excluded from this commerce, and the Genoese establishments which so long flourished on that coast are first heard of some years after a Greek dynasty was again in possession of Constantinople.\*

10. In Asia and Eastern Europe scarcely a dog might bark without Mongol leave, from the borders of Poland and the coast of Cilicia to the Amur and the Yellow Sea. The vast empire which Chinghiz had conquered still owned a nominally supreme head in the Great Kaan, but practically it was splitting up into several great monarchies under the descendants of the four sons of Chinghiz, Juji, Chagatai, Okkodai, and Tuli; and wars on a vast scale were already brewing between them. Hulakû, third son of Tuli, and brother of two Great Kaans, Mangu and Kublai, had become practically independent as ruler of Persia, Babylonia, Mesopotamia, and Armenia, though he and his sons, and his sons' sons, continued to stamp the name of the Great Kaan upon their coins, and to use the Chinese seals of state which he bestowed upon them.

The various  
Mongol  
Sovereign-  
ties in Asia  
and Eastern  
Europe.

Barka, son of Juji, the first ruling prince of the House of Chinghiz to turn Mahomedan, reigned on the steppes of the Wolga, where a standing camp which eventually became a

\* See Hayd, *Le Colonie Commerciali degli Italiani*, &c., *passim*

great city under the name of Sarai, had been established by his brother and predecessor Batu.

The House of Chagatai had settled upon the pastures of the Ili and the valley of the Jaxartes, and ruled the wealthy cities of Sogdiana.

Kaidu, the grandson of Okkodai who had been the successor of Chinghiz in the Kaanship, refused to acknowledge the transfer of the supreme authority to the House of Tuli, and was through the long life of Kublai a thorn in his side, perpetually keeping his north-western frontier in alarm. His immediate authority was exercised over some part of what we should now call Eastern Turkestan and Southern Central Siberia; whilst his hordes of horsemen, force of character, and close neighbourhood brought the Kaahs of Chagatai under his influence, and they generally acted in concert with him.

The chief throne of the Mongol Empire had just been ascended by Kublai, the most able of its occupants after the Founder. Before the death of his brother and predecessor Mangu, who died in 1259 before an obscure fortress of Western China, it had been intended to remove the seat of government from Kara Korum on the northern verge of the Mongolian Desert to the more populous regions that had been conquered in the further East, and this step, which in the end converted the Mongol Kaan into a Chinese Emperor, was carried out by Kublai.

11. For about three centuries the Northern provinces of China had been detached from native rule, and subject to foreign dynasties; first to the *Khitan*, a people supposed to have been akin to the Tunguses, whose rule subsisted for 200 years, and originated the name of Khitai, Khata, or Cathay, by which for nearly 1000 years China has been known to the nations of Inner Asia, and to those whose acquaintance with it was got by that channel. The Khitan, whose dynasty is known in Chinese history as the *Liao* or "Iron," had been displaced in 1123 by the Churchés or Nyuché, another race of Eastern Tartary, of the same blood as the modern Manchus, whose Emperors in their brief period of prosperity were known by the Chinese name of Tai-Kin, by the Mongol name of the *Altun* Kaans, both signifying "Golden." Already in the life-time of Chinghiz himself the northern Provinces of China Proper, including their capital,

known as Chung-tu or Yen-King, now Peking, had been wrenched from them, and the conquest of the dynasty was completed by Chinghiz's successor Okkodai in 1234.

Southern China still remained in the hands of the native dynasty of the Sung, who had their capital at the great city now well known as Hangchau-fu. Their dominion was still substantially untouched, but its subjugation was a task to which Kublai before many years turned his attention, and which became the most prominent event of his reign.

12. In India the most powerful sovereign was the Sultan of Delhi, Nassir-uddin Mahmud of the Turki house of Altmish; but, though both Sind and Bengal acknowledged his supremacy, no part of Peninsular India had yet been invaded, and throughout the long period of our Traveller's residence in the East the Kings of Delhi had their hands too full, owing to the incursions of the Mongols across the Indus, to venture on extensive campaigning in the south. Hence the Dravidian Kingdoms of Southern India were as yet untouched by foreign conquest, and the accumulated gold of ages lay in their temples and treasures, an easy prey for the coming invader.

In the Indo-Chinese Peninsula and the Eastern Islands a variety of kingdoms and dynasties were expanding and contracting, of which we have at best but dim and shifting glimpses. That they were advanced in wealth and art, far beyond what the present state of those regions would suggest, is attested by vast and magnificent remains of Architecture, nearly all dating, so far as dates can be ascertained, from the 12th to the 14th centuries, (that epoch during which an architectural afflatus seems to have descended on the human race), and which are found at intervals over both the Indo-Chinese continent and the Islands, as at Pagán in Burma, at Yuthia in Siam, at Ongkor in Kamboja, at Borobodur and Brambanan in Java. All these remains are deeply marked by Hindu influence, and, at the same time, by strong peculiarities, both generic and individual.

### III. THE POLO FAMILY. PERSONAL HISTORY OF THE TRAVELLERS DOWN TO THEIR FINAL RETURN FROM THE EAST.

13. In days when History and Genealogy<sup>s</sup> were allowed to draw largely on the imagination for the *origines* of states and families, it was set down by one Venetian Antiquary that among the companions of King Venetus, or of Prince Antenor of Troy, when they settled on the northern shores of the Adriatic, there was one LUCIUS POLUS, who became the progenitor of our Traveller's Family ;\* whilst another deduces it from PAOLO the first Doge,† (Paulus Lucas Anafestus of Heraclea, A.D. 696).

More trustworthy traditions, recorded among the Family Histories of Venice, but still no more it is believed than traditions, represent the Family of Polo as having come from Sebenico in Dalmatia, in the 11th century.‡ Before the middle of the following century they had taken seats in the Great Council of the Republic ; for the name of Pietro Polo is said to be subscribed to an act of the time of the Doge Domenico Michiele in 1122, and that of Domenico Polo to an acquittance granted by the Doge Domenico Morosini and his Council in 1153.§

The ascertained genealogy of the Traveller, however, begins only with his grandfather, who lived in the early part of the 13th century.

Two branches of the Polo Family were then recognized, distinguished by the *confini* or Parishes in which they lived, as

\* Zurlo, I. 42, quoting a MS. entitled *Petrus Ciera S. R. E. Card. de Origine Venetorum et de Civitate Venetiarum*. Cicogna says he could not find this MS. as it had been carried to England ; and then breaks into a diatribe against foreigners who purchase and carry away such treasures, "not to make a serious study of them, but for mere vainglory . . . or in order to write books contradicting the very MSS. that they have bought, and with that dishonesty and untruth which are so notorious !" (IV. 227).

† *Campidoglio Veneto* of Capellari (MS. in St. Mark's Lib.) quoting "the Venetian Annals of Giulio Faroldi"

‡ The *Genealogies* of Marco Barbaro specify 1033 as the year of the migration to Venice ; on what authority does not appear (MS. copy in *Museo Civico* at Venice).

§ *Capellari* n. a. and *Barbaro*. In the same century we find (1125, 1195) indications of Polos at Torcello, and of others (1160) at Equileo, and (1179, 1206) at Lido Maggiore ; in 1154 a Marco Polo of Rialto. Contemporary with these is a family of Polos (1139, 1182, 1193, 1201) at Chioggia (*Documents and Lists of Documents from various Archives at Venice*).

Polo of S. Geremia, and Polo of S. Felice. ANDREA POLO of S. Felice was the father of three sons, MARCO, NICOLO, and MAFFEO. And Nicolo was the Father of our Marco.

14. Till quite recently it had never been precisely ascertained whether the immediate family of our Traveller belonged to the *Nobles* of Venice properly so called, who had seats in the Great Council and were enrolled in the Libro d'Oro. Ramusio indeed styles our Marco, *Nobile* and *Magnifico*, and Rusticiano the actual scribe of the Traveller's recollections calls him "*sages et noble citaiens de Venecce*," but Ramusio's accuracy and Rustician's precision were scarcely to be depended on. Very recently, however, since the subject has been discussed with accomplished students of the Venice Archives, proofs have been found establishing Marco's personal claim to nobility, inasmuch as both in judicial decisions and in official resolutions of the Great Council, he is designated *Nobilitis Vir*, a formula which would never have been used in such documents (I am assured) had he not been technically noble.\*

Claims to  
be styled  
noble.

15. Of the three sons of Andrea Polo of S. Felice, Marco seems to have been the eldest, and Maffeo the youngest.† They were all engaged in commerce, and apparently in a partnership, which to some extent held good even when the two younger had been many years absent in the Far East.‡ Marco seems to have been established for a time at Constantinople,§ and also to have had a house (no doubt of business) at Soldaia, in the Crimea, where his son and daughter, Nicolo and Maroca by name,

Marco the  
Elder.

\* See Appendix C, Nos. 4, 5, and 10. It was supposed that an autograph of Marco as member of the Great Council had been discovered, but this proves to be a mistake, as will be explained further on. In those days the demarcation between Patrician and non-Patrician at Venice, where all classes shared in commerce, all were (generally speaking) of one race, and where there were neither castles, domains, nor trains of horsemen, formed no wide gulf. Still it is interesting to establish the verity of the old tradition of Marco's technical nobility.

† Marco's seniority rests only on the assertion of Ramusio, who also calls Maffeo older than Nicolo. But in Marco the Elder's will these two are always (3 times) specified as "*Nicolaus et Mathæus*."

‡ This seems implied in the Elder Marco's Will (1280): "*Item de bonis que me habere contingunt de fraternâ Compagnia a superscriptis Nicolao et Mathæo Paulo*," &c.

§ In his Will he terms himself "*Ego Marcus Paulo quondam de Constantinopoli*."

were living in 1280. This year is the date of the Elder Marco's Will, executed at Venice, and when he was "weighed down by bodily ailment." Whether he survived for any length of time we do not know.

16. Nicolo Polo, the second of the Brothers, had two legitimate sons, MARCO the Author of our Book, born in 1254,\* and MAFFEO, of whose place in the family we shall have a few words to say presently. The story opens as we have said, in 1260, when we find the two brothers, Nicolo, and Maffeo the Elder, at Constantinople. How long they had been absent from Venice we are not distinctly told. Nicolo had left his wife there behind him; Maffeo apparently was a bachelor. In the year named they started on a trading venture to the Crimea, whence a succession of openings and chances, recounted in the Introductory chapters of Marco's work, carried them far north along the Wolga, and thence first to Bokhara and then to the Court of the Great Kaan Kublai in the far East, on or within the borders of CATHAY. That a great and civilized country so called existed in the extremity of Asia had already been reported in Europe by the Friars Plano Carpini (1246) and William Rubruquis (1253), who had not indeed reached its frontiers, but had met with its people at the Court of the Great Kaan in Mongolia; whilst the latter of the two had been shrewd enough to see that they were identical with the Seres of classic fame.

17. Kublai had never before fallen in with European gentlemen. He was delighted with these Venetians, listened with strong interest to all that they had to tell him of the Latin World, and determined to send them back as his ambassadors to the Pope, accompanied by an officer of his own court. His letters to the Pope, as the Polos represent them, were mainly to desire the despatch of a large body of educated missionaries to convert his people to Christianity. It is not likely that religious motives influenced Kublai in this, but he probably desired religious aid in softening and civilizing his rude kinsmen of the Steppes, and judged, from what he saw in the Venetians and heard from

---

\* There is no real ground for doubt as to this. All the extant MSS. agree in making Marco fifteen years old when his father returned to Venice in 1269.

them, that Europe could afford such aid of a higher quality than the degenerate Oriental Christians with whom he was familiar, or the Tibetan Lamas on whom his patronage eventually devolved when Rome so deplorably failed to meet his advances.

18. The Brothers arrived at Acre in April,\* 1269, and found that no Pope existed, for Clement IV. was dead the year before, and no new election had taken place.

So they went home to Venice to see how things stood there after their absence of so many years. The wife of Nicolas was no longer among the living, but he found his son Marco a fine lad of fifteen.

Their return home, and Marco's appearance on the scene.

The best and most authentic MSS. tell us no more than this. But one class of copies, consisting of the Latin version made by our Traveller's contemporary, Francesco Pipino, and of the numerous editions based indirectly upon it, represents that Nicolas had left Venice when Marco was as yet unborn, and consequently had never seen him till this return from the East in 1269.†

We have mentioned that Nicolo Polo had another legitimate son, by name Maffeo, and him we infer to have been younger than Marco, because he is named last (*Marcus et Mathens*) in the Testament of their uncle Marco the Elder. We do not know if they were by the same mother. They could not have been so if we are right in supposing Maffeo to have been the younger, and if Pipino's version of the

\* Baldello and Lazari say that the Bern MS. specifies 30th April; but this is a mistake.

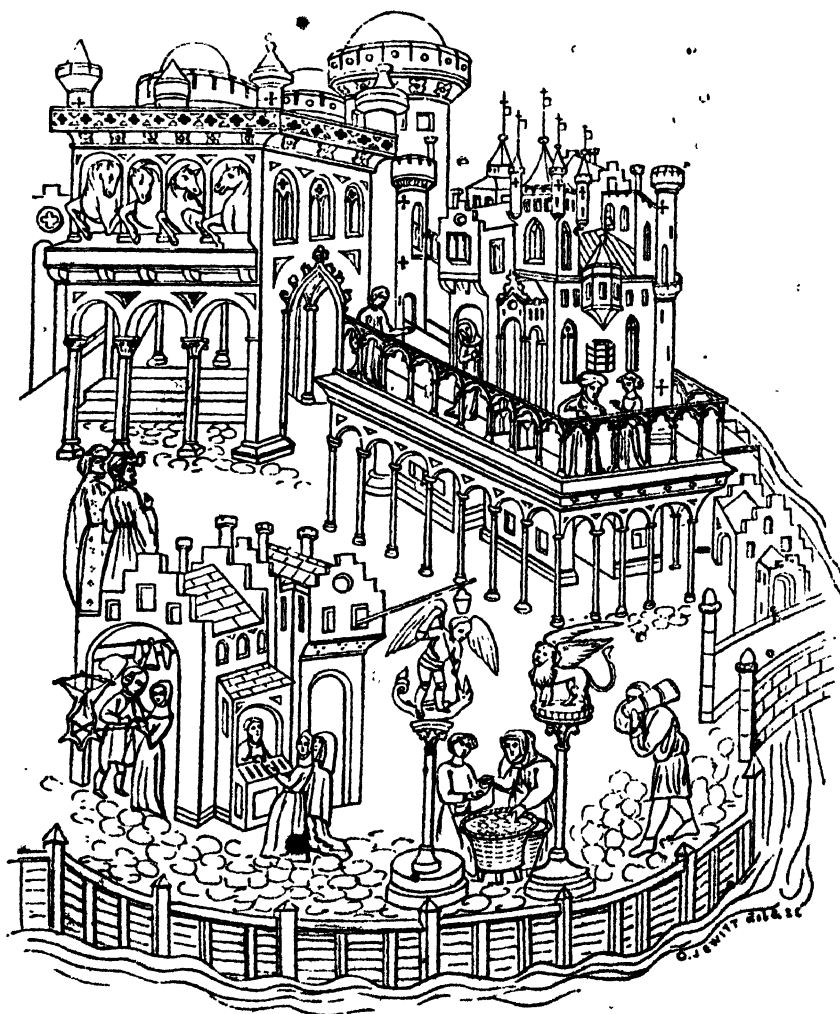
† Pipino's version runs: "Invenit Nicolaus Paulus uxorem suam defunctam, quae in recessu ejus praegnans fuerat. Invenitque filium, Marcum nomine, qui jam annos XV. habebat aetatis, qui post decessum ipsius de Venetiis natus fuerat de uxore praefata." To this Ramusio adds the further particular that the mother died in giving birth to Mark.

The interpolation is older even than Pipino's version, for we find in the rude Latin published by the Société de Géographie "quam cum Venetiis primo recessit praegnantem dimiserat." But the statement is certainly an *interpolation*, for it does not exist in any of the older texts; nor have we any good reason for believing that it was an *authorized* interpolation. I suspect it to have been introduced to harmonize with an erroneous date for the commencement of the travels of the two brothers.

Lazari prints: "Messer Nicolo trovò che la sua donna era morta, e n'era rimasto un fanguccio di dodici anni per nome Marco, che il padre non aveva veduto mai, perchè non era ancor nato quando egli partì." These words have no equivalent in the French Texts, but are taken from one of the Italian MSS. in the Magliabechian Library, and are I suspect also interpolated. The *dodici* is pure error\* (see p. 18, *infra*).



history be genuine. If however we reject the latter, as I incline to do, no ground remains for supposing that Nicolo went to the East much before we find him there, viz., in 1260, and Maffeo may have been born of the same mother during the



The Piazzetta at Venice; from the Bodleian MS. of Polo.

interval between 1254 and 1260. If on the other hand Pipino's version be held to, we must suppose that Maffeo (who is named by his uncle in 1280, during his father's second absence in the East) was born of a marriage contracted during Nicolo's

residence at home after his first journey, a residence which lasted from 1269 to 1271.\*

19. The Papal interregnum was the longest known, at least since the dark ages. Those two years passed, and yet the Cardinals at Viterbo had come to no agreement. The brothers were unwilling to let the Great Kaan think them faithless, and perhaps they hankered after the virgin field of speculation that they had discovered; so they started again for the East, taking young Mark with them. At Acre they took counsel with an eminent churchman, TEDALDO (or Tebaldo) VISCONTI Archdeacon of Liege, whom the Book represents to have been Legate in Syria, and who in any case was a personage of much gravity and influence. From him they got letters to authenticate the causes of the miscarriage of their mission, and started for the further East. But they were still at the port of Ayas on the Gulf of Scanderoon, which was then becoming one of the chief points of arrival and departure for the inland trade of Asia, when they were overtaken by the news that a Pope was at last elected, and that the choice had fallen upon their friend Archdeacon Tedaldo. They immediately returned to Acre, and at last were able to execute the Kaan's commission, and to obtain a reply. But instead of the hundred able teachers of science and religion whom Kublai is said to have asked for, the new Pope, Gregory X., could supply but two Dominicans; and these lost heart and drew back when they had barely taken the first step of the journey.

Second  
Journey of  
the Polo  
Brothers,  
accompanied  
by Marco.

\* The last view is in substance, I find, suggested by Cicogna (ii. 389).

The matter is of some interest, because in the Will of the younger Maffeo, which is extant, he makes a bequest to his uncle (*Avunculus*) Jordan Trevisan. This seems an indication that his mother's name may have been Trevisan. The same Maffeo had a daughter *Fiordelisa*. And Marco the Elder, in his Will (1280), appoints as his executors, during the absence of his brothers, the same Jordan Trevisan and his own sister-in-law *Fiordelisa* ("Jordanum Trevisanum de consorcio S. Antonini et Fiordelisam cognatam meam." Hence I conjecture that this *cognata* *Fiordelisa* (Trevisan) was the wife of the absent Nicolo, and the mother of Maffeo. In that case of course Maffeo and Marco were the sons of different mothers. With reference to the above suggestion of Nicolo's second marriage in 1269 there is a curious variation in a fragmentary Venetian Polo in the Barberini Library at Rome. It runs, in the passage corresponding to the latter part of chapter ix. of Prologue: "I qual do fratelli in do anni in Venetia aspettando la elation de nuovo Papa, nel qual si tolse moier et se la sua grande." I believe, however, that it is only a careless misrendering of Nicolo's statement about Marco's birth.

Judging from certain indications we conceive it probable that the three Venetians, whose second start from Acre took place about November 1271, proceeded by Ayas and Sivas, and then by Mardin, Mosul, and Baghdad, to Hormuz at the mouth of the Persian Gulf, with the view of going on by sea, but that some obstacle arose which compelled them to abandon this project and turn north again from Hormuz. They then traversed successively Kerman and Khorasan, Balkh and Badakhshan, whence they ascended the upper Oxus to the Plateau of Pamer, a route not known to have been since followed by any European traveller except Benedict Goes, till the spirited expedition of Captain John Wood of the Indian Navy in 1838.\* Crossing the Pamer steppe the travellers descended upon Kashgar, whence they proceeded by Yarkand and Khotan, and the vicinity of Lake Lob, and eventually across the Great Gobi Desert to Tangut, the name then applied by Mongols and Persians to territory at the extreme North-west of China, both within and without the Wall. Skirting the northern frontier of China they at last reached the presence of the Kaan, who was at his usual summer retreat at Kaipingsu, near the base of the Khingan Mountains, and about 50 miles north of the Great Wall. If there be no mistake in the time (three years and a half) ascribed to this journey in all the existing texts, the travellers did not reach the Court till about May of 1275.†

20. Kublai received the Venetians with great cordiality, and took kindly to young Mark, who must have been by this time one-and-twenty. The *Foenne Bachelier*, as the story calls him, applied himself to the acquisition of the languages and written characters in chief use among the multifarious nationalities included in the Kaan's Court and administration; and Kublai after a time, seeing his discretion and ability, began to employ him in the public service. M. Pauthier has found a record in the Chinese Annals of the Mongol Dynasty, which states that in the year 1277, a certain POLO was nominated a second-class

Marco's  
employment  
by Kublai  
Kaan: and  
his journeys.

\* It is stated by Neumann that Captain Wood once intended to have devoted a special work to the elucidation of Marco's chapters on the Oxus Provinces, and it is much to be regretted that this intention has never been fulfilled.

† Or, perhaps half a year earlier, if we suppose the three years and a half to count from Venice rather than Acre.

commissioner or agent attached to the Privy Council, a passage which we are happy to believe to refer to our young traveller.\*

His first mission apparently was that which carried him through the provinces of Shansi, Shensi, and Szechuen, and the wild country on the East of Tibet, to the remote province of Yunnan, called by the Mongols Karájáng, and which had been partially conquered by an army under Kublai himself in 1253, before his accession to the throne.† Mark, during his stay at court, had observed the Kaan's delight in hearing of strange countries, their marvels, manners, and oddities, and had heard his Majesty's frank expressions of disgust at the stupidity of his commissioners when they could speak of nothing but the official business on which they had been sent. Profiting by these observations, he took care to store his memory or his note books with all curious facts that were likely to interest Kublai, and related them with vivacity on his return to Court. This first journey, which led him through a region which is still very nearly a *terra incognita*, and in which there existed and still exists, among the deep valleys of the Great Rivers flowing down from Eastern Tibet, and in the rugged mountain ranges bordering Yunnan and Kweichau, a vast Ethnological Garden, as it were, of tribes of various race and in every stage of uncivilization, afforded him an acquaintance with many strange products and eccentric traits of manners, wherewith to delight the Emperor.

Mark rose rapidly in favour, and was often employed again on distant missions, as well as in domestic administration, but we gather few details as to his employments. At one time we know that he held for three years the government of the great city of Yangchau, though we need not try to magnify this

\* *Pauthier*, p. ix, and p. 361.

† That this was Marco's first mission is positively stated in the Ramusian edition; and though this may be only an editor's gloss it seems well-founded. The French texts say only that the Great Kaan, "l'envoia en un message en une terre ou bien avoit vj. mois de chemin." The traveller's actual Itinerary affords to Vochan (Yungchang), on the frontier of Burma, 147 days' journey, which with halts might well be reckoned six months in round estimate. And we are enabled by various circumstances to fix the date of the Yunnan journey between 1277 and 1280. The former limit is determined by Polo's account of the battle with the Burmese, near Vochan, which took place according to the Chinese Annals in 1277. The latter is fixed by his mention of Kublai's son, Mangkai, as governing at Kien-fanfu (Singan-fu), a prince who died in 1280. (See vol. ii. p. 17, also pp. 48, 49).

office, as some commentators have done, into the viceroyalty of one of the great provinces of the Empire; on another occasion we find him with his uncle Maffeo, passing a year at Kanchau in Tangut; again, it would appear, visiting Kara Korum, the old capital of the Kaans in Mongolia; on another occasion in Champa or Southern Cochin China; and again, or perhaps as a part of the last expedition, on a mission to the Indian Seas, when he appears to have visited several of the southern states of India. We are not informed whether his father and uncle shared in such employments\*; and the story of their services rendered to the Kaan in promoting the capture of the city of Siangyang, by the construction of powerful engines of attack, is too much perplexed by difficulties of chronology to be cited with confidence. Anyhow they were gathering wealth, and after years of exile they began to dread what might follow old Kublai's death, and longed to carry their gear and their own grey heads safe home to the Lagoons. The aged Emperor growled refusal to all their hints, and but for a happy chance we should have lost our medieval Herodotus.

21. Arghun Kaan of Persia, Kublai's great-nephew, had in 1286 lost his favourite wife the Khatun Bulughán; and, mourning her sorely, took steps to fulfil her dying injunction that her place should be filled only by a lady of her own kin, the Mongol Tribe of Bayaut. Ambassadors were despatched to the Court of Kaan-baligh to seek such a bride. The message was courteously received, and the choice fell on the Lady Kukáchin, a maiden of 17, "*moult bele dame et avenant*." The overland road from Peking to Tabriz was not only of portentous length for such a tender charge, but was imperilled by war, so the envoys desired to return by sea. Tartars in general were strangers to all navigation; and the envoys, much taken with the Venetians, and eager to profit by their experience, especially as Marco had just then returned from his Indian mission, begged the Kaan as a favour to send the three *Firinghis* in their company. He consented with reluctance, but, having done so, fitted the party out nobly for the voyage, charging the Polos

\* Excepting in the doubtful case of Kanchau, where one reading says that the three Polos were there on business of their own not necessary to mention, and another, that only Maffeo and Marco were there "*en legation*."

with friendly messages for the potentates of Europe, including the King of England. They appear to have sailed from the port of Zaytôn (as the Westerns called Thsiuanchau or Chin-chau in Fokien) in the beginning of 1292. It was an ill-starred voyage, and involved long detentions on the coast of Sumatra, and in the South of India, to which, however, we are indebted for some of the best chapters in the book; and two years or upwards\* passed before they arrived at their destination in Persia.\* The three hardy Venetians survived all perils, and so did the lady, who had come to look on them with filial regard; but two of the three envoys, and a vast proportion of the suite, had perished by the way. Arghun Kaan too had been dead even before they quitted China†; his brother Kaikhatu reigned in his stead; and his son Ghazan succeeded to the lady's hand. We are told by one who knew both the princes well that Arghun was one of the handsomest men of his time, whilst Ghazan was, among all his host, one of the most insignificant in appearance. But in other respects the lady's change was for the better. Ghazan had some of the highest qualities of a soldier, a legislator and a king, adorned by many and varied accomplishments; though his reign was too short for the full development of his fame.

22. The princess, whose enjoyment of her royalty was brief, wept as she took leave of the kindly and noble Vene-

\* Persian history seems to fix the arrival of the Lady Kukáchin in the North of Persia to the winter of 1293-4. The voyage to Sumatra occupied three months (vol. i. p. 33); they were five months detained there (ii. 235); and the remainder of the voyage extended to eighteen more (i. 33),—twenty-six months in all.

The data are too slight for unexceptionable precision, but the following adjustment will fairly meet the facts. Say that they sailed from Fokien in January 1292. In April they would be in Sumatra, and find the S.W. Monsoon too near to admit of their crossing the Bay of Bengal. They remain in port till September (five months), and then proceed, touching (perhaps) at Ceylon, at Kayal, and at several ports of Western India. In one of these, e.g. Kayal or Tana, they pass the S.W. Monsoon of 1293, and then proceed to the Gulf. They reach Hormuz in the winter, and the camp of the Persian Prince Ghazan, the son of Arghun, in March, twenty-six months from their departure.

I have been unable to trace Hammer's authority (not Wassáf I find), which perhaps gives the precise date of the Lady's arrival in Persia (see *infra*, p. 36). From his narrative, however (*Gesch. der Ilkhane*, ii. 26), March 1294 is perhaps too late a date. But the five month's stoppage in Sumatra *must* have been in the S.W. Monsoon; and if the arrival in Persia is put earlier, Polo's numbers can scarcely be held to. Or, the eighteen months mentioned at vol. i. p. 33, *must* include the five months' stoppage. We may then suppose that they reached Hormuz about November, 1293, and Ghazan's camp a month or two later.

† Died 12th March, 1291.

tians. They went on to Tabriz, and after a long halt there proceeded homewards, reaching Vefice<sup>o</sup> according to all the texts, some time in 1295.\*

They pass by Persia to Venice.  
• Their relations there.

We have related Rāmusio's interesting tradition, like a bit out of the Arabian Nights, of the reception that the Travellers met with from their relations, and of the means that they took to establish their position with those relations, and with Venetian society.† Of the relations, Marco the Elder had probably been long dead‡; Maffeo the brother of

\* All dates are found so corrupt that even in this one I do not feel absolute confidence. Marco in dictating the book is aware that Ghazan had attained the throne of Persia (see vol. i. p. 34, and ii. pp. 32 and 408), an event which did not occur till October, 1295. The date assigned to it, however, by Marco (ii. 408) is 1294, or the year *before* that assigned to the return home.

The travellers may have stopped some time at Constantinople on their way, or even may have visited the northern shores of the Black Sea; otherwise, indeed, how did Marco acquire his knowledge of that Sea (ii. 418) and of events in Kipchak (ii. 421, *seqq.*)? If 1296 was the date of return, moreover, the six-and-twenty years assigned in the preamble as the period of Marco's absence (p. 2) would be nearer accuracy. For he left Venice in the spring or summer of 1271.

† Marco Barbaro, in his account of the Polo family, tells what seems to be the same tradition in a different and more mythical version:—

“From ear to ear the story has past till it reached mine, that when the three Kinsmen arrived at their home they were dressed in the most shabby and sordid manner, insomuch that the wife of one of them gave away to a beggar that came to the door one of those garments of his, all torn, patched, and dirty as it was. The next day he asked his wife for that mantle of his, in order to put away the jewels that were sewn up in it; but she told him she had given it away to a poor man, whom she did not know. Now, the stratagem he employed to recover it was this. He went to the Bridge of Rialto, and stood there turning a wheel, to no apparent purpose, but as if he were a madman, and to all those who crowded round to see what prank was this, and asked him why he did it, he answered: ‘He'll come if God pleases.’ So after two or three days he recognized his old coat on the back of one of those who came to stare at his mad proceeding, and got it back again. Then, indeed, he was judged to be quite the reverse of a madman! And from those jewels he built in the contrada of S. Giovanni Grisostomo, a very fine palace for those days; and the family got among the vulgar the name of the *Ca' Million*, because the report was that they had jewels to the value of a million of ducats; and the palace has kept that name to the present day—*vis.*, 1566.” (*Genealogies*, MS. copy in *Museo Civico*; quoted also by *Baldello Boni, Vita*, p. xxxi).

‡ The Will of the Elder Marco, to which we have several times referred, is dated at Rialto 5th August, 1280.

The testator describes himself as formerly of Constantinople, but now dwelling in the confine of S. Severo.

His brothers *Nicolo* and *Maffeo*, if at Venice, are to be his sole trustees and executors, but in case of their continued absence he nominates *Jordano Trevisano*, and his sister-in-law *Fiordelisa* of the confine of S. Severo.

The proper tithe to be paid. All his clothes and furniture to be sold, and from the proceeds his funeral to be defrayed, and the balance to purchase masses for his soul at the discretion of his trustees.

Particulars of money due to him from his partnership with Donato Grasso, now

our Marco was alive, and we hear also of a cousin (*consanguineus*) Felice Polo, and his wife Fiordelisa, without being able to fix their precise position in the family. We know also that Nicolo, who died before the end of the century, left behind him two illegitimate sons, Stefano and Zannino. It is not unlikely that these were born from some connexion entered into during the long residence of the Polos in Cathay, though naturally their presence in the travelling company is not commemorated in Marco's Prologue.\*

#### IV. DIGRESSION CONCERNING THE MANSION OF THE POLO FAMILY AT VENICE.

23. We have seen that Ramusio places the scene of the story recently alluded to at the mansion in the parish of S. Giovanni Grisostomo, the court of which was known in his time as the Corte del Millione; and indeed he speaks of the Travellers as at once on their arrival resorting to that mansion as their family residence. Ramusio's details have so often proved erroneous that I should not be surprised if this also should be a mistake.

Probable  
period of  
their esta-  
blishment at  
S. Giovanni  
Grisostomo.

of Justinople (Capo d'Istria), 1200 lire in all. (Fifty-two lire due by said partnership to Angelo di Tumba of S. Severo).

The above money bequeathed to his son Nicolo, living at Soldachia, or failing him, to his beloved brothers Nicolo and Maffeo. Failing them, to the sons of his said brothers (*sic*) Marco and Maffeo. Failing them, to be spent for the good of his soul at the discretion of his trustees.

To his son Nicolo he bequeaths a silver-wrought girdle of vermillion silk, two silver spoons, a silver cup without handle, his desk, two pair of sheets, a velvet quilt, a counterpane, a feather-bed—all on the same conditions as above, and to remain with the trustees till his son returns to Venice.

Meanwhile the trustees are to invest the money at his son's risk and benefit, but only here in Venice (*investiant seu investire faciant*).

From the proceeds to come in from his partnership with his brothers Nicolo and Maffeo, he bequeaths 200 lire to his daughter Maroca.

From same source 100 lire to his natural son Antony.

Has in his desk (*capsella*) two hyperpera, (Byzantine gold coins), and three golden florins, which he bequeaths to the sister-in-law Fiordelisa.

Gives freedom to all his slaves and handmaidens.

Leaves his house in Soldachia to the Minor Friars of that place, reserving life-occupancy to his son Nicolo and daughter Maroca.

The rest of his goods to his son Nicolo.

\* The terms in which the younger Maffeo mentions these half-brothers in his Will (1300) seem to indicate that they were still young.



# INTRODUCTION

The site of the  
CA' POLO.

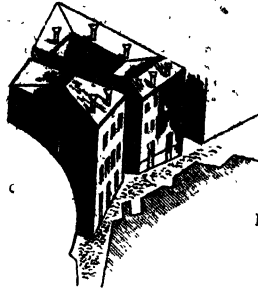


Fig. A.  
From the Dürer Ma

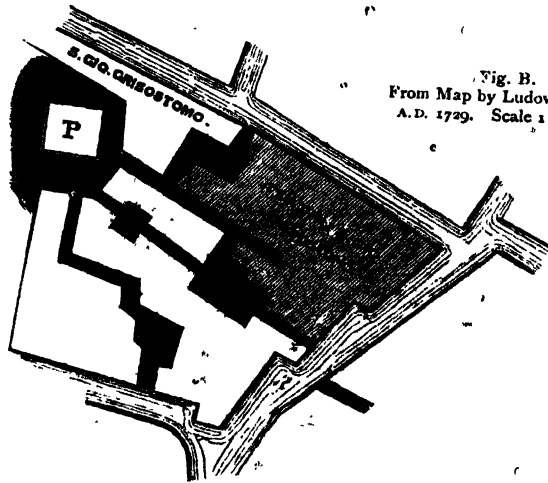


Fig. B.  
From Map by Ludovico Ughi.  
A.D. 1729. Scale 1 to 2500.

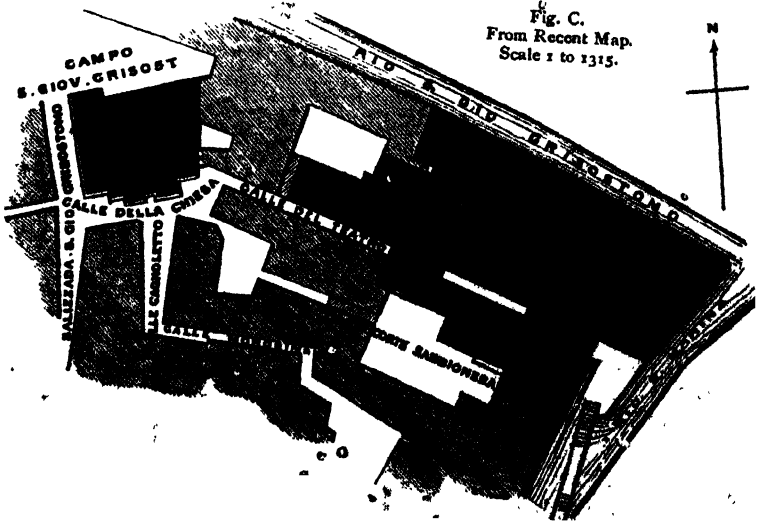


Fig. C.  
From Recent Map.  
Scale 1 to 1315.

## THE CORTE DEL MILLIONE.

At least we find (so far as I can learn) no previous intimation that the family were connected with that locality. The grandfather Andrea is styled of *San Felice*. The will of Maffeo Polo the younger, made in 1300, which we shall give hereafter in abstract, appears to be the first document that connects the family with S. Giovanni Grisostomo. It indeed styles the testator's father "the late Nicolo Paulo of the confine of St. John Chrysostom," but that only shows what is not disputed, that the Travellers after their return from the East settled in this locality. And the same will appears to indicate a surviving connexion with S. Felice, for the priests and clerks who draw it up and witness it are all of the church of S. Felice, and it is to the parson of S. Felice and his successor that Maffeo bequeaths an annuity to procure their prayers for the souls of his father, his mother, and himself, though after the successor the annuity is to pass on the same condition to the senior priest of S. Giovanni Grisostomo. Marco Polo the Elder is in his will described as of *S. Severo*, as is also his sister-in-law Fiordelisa, and the document contains no reference to S. Giovanni. On the whole therefore it seems probable that the Palazzo in the latter parish was purchased by the Travellers after their return from the East.\*

24. The Court which was known in the 16th century as the Corte del Millione has been generally understood to be that now known as the Corte Sabbionera, and here is still pointed out a relic of Marco Polo's mansion.

Relics of the  
Casa Polo in  
the Corte  
Sabbionera.

M. Pauthier's edition is embellished with a good engraving which purports to represent the House of Marco Polo. But he has been misled. His engraving in fact exhibits, at least as the prominent feature, an embellished representation of a small house which exists on the *west side* of the Sabbionera, and which had at one time perhaps that pointed style of architecture which his engraving shows,

---

\* Marco Barbaro's story related at p. liv speaks of the Ca' Million as *built* by the travellers.

From a list of parchments existing in the archives of the *Casa di Ricovero*, or Great Poor House, at Venice, Signor Berchet obtained the following indication:—

"No. 94, *Marco Galletti invents Marco Polo S. of Nicolo with the ownership of his possessions (beni) in S. Giovanni Grisostomo; 10 September, 1319; drawn up by the Notary Nicolo, priest of S. Canciano.*"

This document would perhaps have thrown light on the matter, but unfortunately recent search by several parties has failed to trace it.

though its present decoration is paltry and unreal. But it is on the *north side* of the Court, and on the foundations now occupied by the Malibran Theatre, that Venetian tradition, and the investigations of Venetian antiquaries concur in indicating the site of the Casa Polo. At the end of the 16th century a great fire destroyed the Palazzo,\* and under the description of "an old mansion ruined from the foundation" it passed into the hands of one Stefano Vecchia, who sold it in 1678 to Giovanni Carlo Grimani. He built on the site of the ruins a theatre which was in its day one of the largest in Italy, and was called the Theatre of S. Giovanni Grisostomo; afterwards the *Teatro Emoronitio*. When modernized in our own day the proprietors gave it the name of Malibran, in honour of that famous singer, and this it still bears.†

There is still to be seen on the north side of the Court an arched doorway in Italo-Byzantine style, richly sculptured with scrolls, disks, and symbolical animals, and on the wall above the doorway is a cross similarly ornamented.‡ The style and the decorations are those which were usual in Venice in the 13th century. The arch opens into a passage from which a similar doorway at the other end, also retaining some scantier relics of decoration, leads to the entrance of the Malibran Theatre. Over the archway in the Corte Sabbionera the building rises into a kind of tower. This, as well as the sculptured arches and cross, Signor Casoni, who gave a good deal of consideration to the subject, believed to be a relic of the old Polo House. But the tower (which Pauthier's view does show) is now entirely modernized.§

Other remains of Byzantine sculpture, which are probably fragments of the decoration of the same mansion, are found imbedded in the walls of neighbouring houses.|| It is im-

\* ——"Sua casa che era posta nel confin di S. Giovanni Chrisostomo, che hor fà l'anno s'abbrugidò totalmente, con gran danno di molti." (*Dogioni, Hist. Venetiana*, Ven. 1598, p. 161-2.)

† See a paper by G. C. (the Engineer Giovanni Casoni) in *Teatro Emoronitio, Almanacco per l'Anno 1835*.

‡ This Cross is engraved by Mr. Ruskin in vol. ii. of the *Stones of Venice*; see p. 139, and Pl. xi. Fig. 4.

§ Casoni's only doubt was whether the *Corte del Millione* was what is now the Sabbionera, or the interior area of the theatre. The latter seems most probable.

Our Frontispiece to this volume shows the archway in the Corte Sabbionera, and also the decorations of the soffit.

|| See *Ruskin*, iii. 320.

possible to determine anything further as to the form or extent of the house of the time of the Polos, but some slight idea of its appearance about the year 1500 may be seen in the extract (fig. A) which we give from the famous map of Venice attributed erroneously to Albert Dürer. The state of the buildings in the last century is shown in (fig. B) an extract from the fine Map of Ughi; and their present condition in one (fig. C) reduced from the Modern Official Map of the Municipality.

In the year 1827, the Abate Zenier caused a Tablet to be put up between the Corte Sabbionera and the Theatre, with this inscription :—

AEDES PROXIMA THALIAE CVLTVI MODO ADDICTA  
MARCI POLO P.V. ITINERV M FAMA PRAECLARI  
JAM HABITATIO EVIT.

24*a*. I believe that of late years some doubts have been thrown on the tradition of the site indicated as that of the Casa Polo, though I am not aware of the grounds of such doubts. But a document recently discovered at Venice by Signor Barozzi, one of a series relating to the testamentary estate of Marco Polo, goes far to confirm the tradition. This is the copy of a technical definition of two pieces of house property adjoining the property of Marco Polo and his brother Stephen, which were sold to Marco Polo by his wife Donata \* in June 1321. Though the definition is not decisive, from the rarity of topographical references and absence of points of the compass, the description of Donata's tenements as standing on the Rio (presumably that of S. Giovanni Grisostomo) on one side, opening by certain porticoes and stairs on the other to the Court and common alley leading to the Church of S. Giovanni Grisostomo, and abutting in two places on the CA' POLO the property of her husband and Stefano, will apply perfectly to a building occupying the western portion of the area on which now stands the Theatre, and perhaps forming the western side of a Court of which Casa Polo formed the other three sides.†

Recent cor-  
roboration  
the tra-  
ditional site  
the Casa  
Polo.

\* Sig. Barozzi writes: "Among us, contracts between husband and wife are and were very common, and recognized by law. The wife sells to the husband property not included in dowry, or that she may have inherited, just as any third person might."

† See an abstract of the document in Appendix C, No. 10.

We know nothing more of Polo till we find him appearing a year or two later in rapid succession as the Captain of a Venetian Galley, as a prisoner of war, and as an author.

V. DIGRESSION CONCERNING THE WAR-GALLEYS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN STATES IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

25. AND before entering on this new phase of the Traveller's biography it may not be without interest that we say something regarding the equipment of those galleys which are so prominent in the mediæval history of the Mediterranean.\*

Arrange-  
ment of the  
Rowers in  
Mediæval  
Galleys: a  
separate oar  
to every  
man.

Eschewing that "Serbonian Bog, where armies whole have sunk" of Books and Commentators, the theory of the classification of the Biremes and Triremes of the Ancients, we can at least assert on secure grounds that in *mediæval* armament, up to the middle of the 16th century or thereabouts, the characteristic distinction of galleys of different calibres, so far as such differences existed, was based on the number of rowers that sat on one bench pulling each his separate oar, but through one portella or rowlock-port.† And to the classes of galleys so distinguished the Italians, of the later Middle Age at least, did certainly apply, rightly or wrongly, the classical terms of *Bireme*, *Trireme*, and *Quinquereme*, in the sense of galleys having two men and two oars to a bench, three men and three oars to a bench, and five men and five oars to a bench.‡

That this was the mediæval arrangement is very certain from the details afforded by Marino Sanuto the Elder, confirmed by later writers and by works of art. Previous to 1290, Sanuto tells us, almost all the galleys that went to the

\* I regret not to have had access to Jal's learned memoirs (*Archéologie Navale*, Paris, 1839), whilst writing this section. Since doing so I have just been able to look hastily through his Essay on the difficult subject of the oar arrangements, and I see that he does not admit so great a number of oars as I have deduced from the statements of Sanuto and others.

† It seems the more desirable to elucidate this, because writers on mediæval subjects so accomplished as Buchon and Capmany have (it would seem) entirely misconceived the matter, assuming that all the men on one bench pulled at one oar.

‡ See Coronelli, *Atlante Veneto*, I. 139, 140. Marino Sanuto the Elder, though not using the term *trireme*, says it was well understood from ancient authors that the Romans employed their rowers three to a bench (p. 59).

Levant had but two oars and men to a bench ; but as it had been found that three oars and men to a bench could be employed with great advantage, after that date nearly all galleys adopted this arrangement, which was called *ai Tersaruoli*.\*

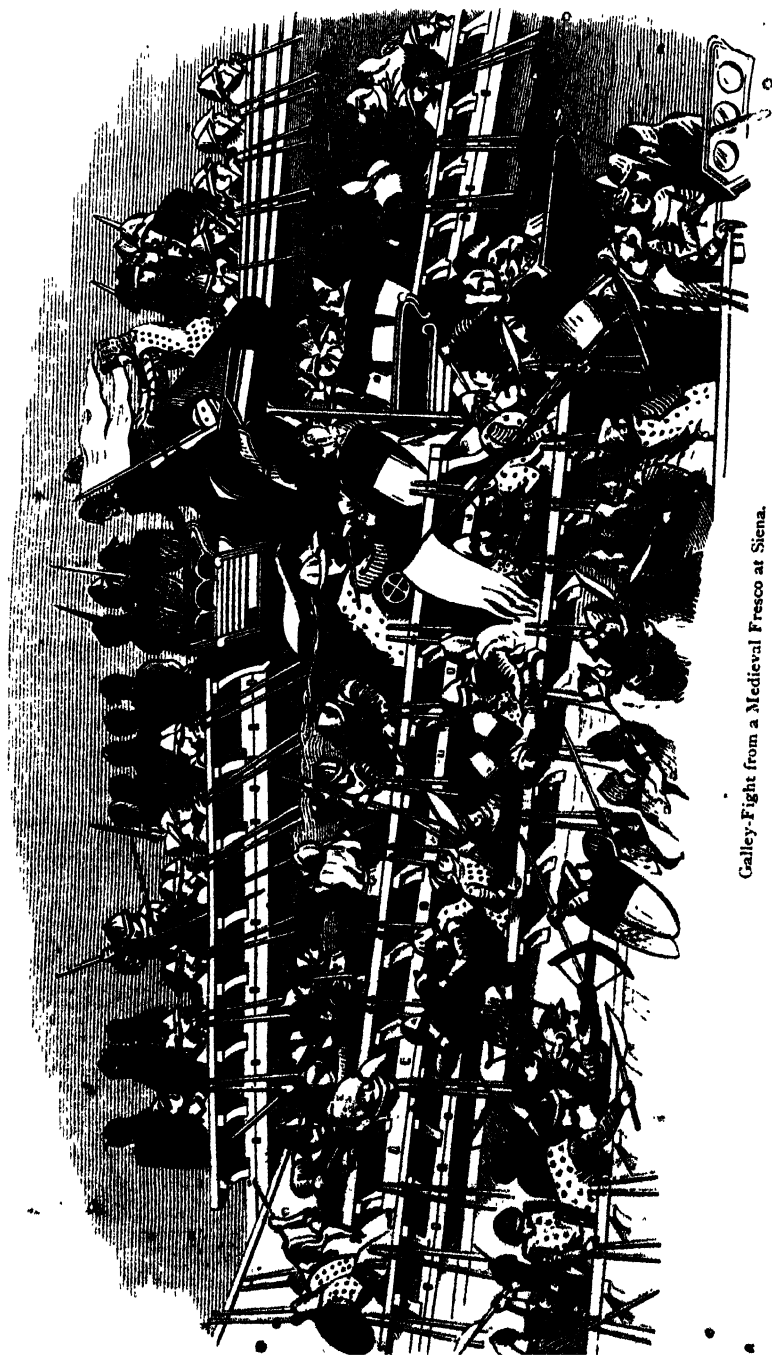
Moreover experiments made by the Venetians in 1316 had shown that four rowers to a bench could be employed still more advantageously. And where the galleys could be used on inland waters, and could be made more bulky, Sanuto would even recommend five to a bench, or have gangs of rowers on two decks with either three or four men to the bench on each deck.

26. This system of grouping the oars, and putting only one man to an oar, continued down to the 16th century, during the first half of which came in the more modern system of using great oars, equally spaced, and requiring from four to seven men each to ply them, in the manner which endured till late in the last century, when galleys became altogether obsolete. Captain Pantero Pantera, the author of a work on Naval Tactics (1616), says he had heard, from veterans who had commanded galleys equipped in the antiquated fashion, that *three* men to a bench, with separate oars, answered better than three men to one great oar, but four men to one great oar (he says) were certainly more efficient than four men with separate oars. The new-fashioned great oars, he tells us, were styled *Remi di Scaloccio*, the old grouped oars *Remi a Zenzile*,—terms the etymology of which I cannot explain.†

It may be doubted whether the four-banked and five-banked galleys, of which Marino Sanuto speaks, really then came into practical use. A great five-banked galley on this system, built in 1529 in the Venice Arsenal by Vettor Fausto, was the subject of so much talk and excitement, that it must

\* "*Ad ternarolos*" (*Secreta Fidelium Cruis*, p. 57). The Catalan Worthy, Ramon de Muntaner, indeed constantly denounces the practice of manning *all* the galleys with *ternaruoli*, or *tersols*, as his term is. But his reason is that these thirdmen were taken from the oar when crossbowmen were wanted, to act in that capacity, and as such they were good for nothing; the crossbowmen, he insists, should be men specially enlisted for that service and kept to that. He would have some 10 or 20 per cent. only of the fleet built very light and manned in threes. He does not seem to have contemplated oars three-banked, and crossbowmen *beside*, as Sanuto does (see below; and Muntaner, pp. 288, 323, 325, &c.).

† *L'Armata Navale*, Roma, 1616, pp. 150-151.



Galley-Fight from a Medieval Fresco at Siena.

evidently have been something quite new and unheard of.\* So late as 1567 indeed the King of Spain built at Barcelona a galley of thirty-six benches to the side, and seven men to the bench, with a separate oar to each in the old fashion. But it proved a failure.†

Down to the introduction of the great oars the usual system appears to have been three oars to a bench for the larger galleys, and two oars for lighter ones. The *fuste* or lighter galleys of the Venetians even to about the middle of the 16th century had their oars in pairs from the stern to the mast, and single oars only from the mast forward.‡

27. Returning then to the three-banked and two-banked galleys of the latter part of the 13th century, the number of benches on each side seems to have run from twenty-five to twenty-eight, at least as I interpret Sanuto's calculations. The 100-oared vessels often mentioned (c.g. by *Muntaner*, p. 419) were probably two-banked vessels with twenty-five benches to a side.

Some details  
of the 13th  
century  
Galleys.

The galleys were very narrow, only  $15\frac{1}{2}$  feet in beam.§ But to give room for the play of the oars and the passage of the fighting-men, &c., this width was largely augmented by an *opera-morta*, or outrigger deck, projecting much beyond the ship's sides and supported by timber brackets.¶ I do not find it stated how great this projection was in the medieval galleys, but in those of the 17th century it was on each side as much as  $\frac{3}{4}$ ths of the true beam. And if it was as great in the 13th century galleys the total width between the false gunnels would be about  $22\frac{1}{4}$  feet.

In the centre line of the deck ran, the whole length of the vessel, a raised gangway called the *corsia*, for passage clear of the oars.

\* See a work to which I am indebted for a good deal of light and information, the Engineer Giovanni Casoni's Essay "*Dei Navigli Poliremi usati nella Marina dagli Antichi Veneziani*," in "*Eserciziansi dell' Arsenale Veneto*, vol. ii. p. 338. This great *Quinquereme*, as it was styled, is stated to have been struck by a fire-arrow and blown up, in January 1570.

† *Pantera*, p. 22.

‡ *Lasarus Bayfius de Re Navalī Veterum*, in *Gronovii Thesaurus*, Ven. 1737, vol. xi. p. 581. This writer also speaks of the *Quinquereme* mentioned above (p. 577).

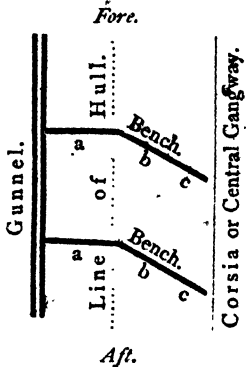
§ *Marino Sanuto*, p. 65.

¶ See the woodcuts opposite, and at p. lxvi; also *Pantera*, p. 46 (who is here, however, speaking of the great-oared galleys), and *Coronelli*, i. 140.



## INTRODUCTION

The benches were arranged as in this diagram. The part of the bench next the gunnel was at right angles to it, but the other two-thirds of the bench were thrown forward obliquely. *a, b, c*, indicate the position of the three rowers. The shortest oar *a* was called *Terlicchio*, the middle one *b* *Posticcio*, the long oar *c* *Piamero*.\*



I do not find any information as to how the oars worked on the gunnels. The Siena fresco (see p. lxii) appears to show them attached by loops and pins, which is the usual practice in boats of the Mediterranean now. In the cut from Tintoretto (p. lxvi) the groups

of oars protrude through regular ports in the bulwarks, but this probably represents the use of a later day. In any case the oars of each bench must have worked in very close proximity. Sanuto states the length of the galleys of his time (1300-1320) as 117 feet. This was doubtless length of *keel*, for that is specified (*“da ruoda a ruoda”*) in other Venetian measurements, but the whole oar space could scarcely have been so much, and with twenty-eight benches to a side there could not have been more than 4 feet gunnel-space to each bench. But as one of the objects of the grouping of the oars was to allow room between the benches for the action of cross-bowmen, &c., it is plain that the rowlock space for the three oars must have been very much compressed.†

\* Cassoni, p. 324. He obtains these particulars from a manuscript work of the 16th century by Cristoforo Canale.

† Signor Cassoni (p. 324) expresses his belief that no galley of the 14th century had more than 100 oars. I hesitate to differ from him, and still more as I find M. Jal takes a like view. I will state the grounds on which I had come to a different conclusion. (1) Marino Sanuto assigns 180 rowers for a galley equipped *ai Terauoli* (p. 75). This seemed to imply something near 180 oars, for I do not find any allusion to reliefs being provided. In the French galleys of last century there were no reliefs except in this way, that in long runs without urgency only half the oars were pulled (see *Mém. d'un Protestant condamné aux Galères*, &c., Reimprimés, Paris, 1865, p. 447). If four men to a bench were to be employed, then Sanuto seems to calculate for his smaller galleys 220 men actually rowing (see pp. 75-78). This seems to assume 55 benches, *i. e.*, 28 on one side and 27 on the other, which with 3-banked oars would give 165 rowers. (2) Cassoni himself refers to Pietro Martire d'Anghiera's account of a Great Galley of Venice in which he was sent ambassador to Egypt from the Spanish Court in 1503. The crew

The rowers were divided into three classes, with graduated pay. The highest class, who pulled the poop or stroke oars, were called *Portolati*; those at the bow, called *Prodieri*, formed the second class.\*

Some elucidation of the arrangements that we have tried to describe will be found in our cuts. That at p. lxii is from a drawing, by the aid of a very imperfect photograph, of part of one of the frescoes of Spinello Aretini in the Municipal Palace at Siena, representing the victory of the Venetians over the Emperor Frederic Barbarossa's fleet, commanded by his son Otho, in 1176; but no doubt the galleys, &c., are of the artist's own age, the middle of the 14th century.† In this we see plainly the projecting *opera-morta*, and the rowers sitting two to a bench, each with his oar, for these are two-banked. We can also discern the Latin rudder on the quarter (see this volume, p. 111). In a picture in the Uffizj, at Florence, of about the same date, by Pietro Laurato (it is in the corridor near the entrance), may be seen a small figure of a galley with the oars also very distinctly coupled.‡ Casoni has engraved, after Cristoforo Canale, a pictorial plan of a Venetian trireme of

amounted to 200, of whom 150 were for working the sails and oars, *that being the number of oars in each galley*, one man to each oar and three to each bench. Casoni assumes that this vessel must have been much larger than the galleys of the 14th century; but, however that may have been, Sanuto to his galley assigns the larger crew of 250, of whom almost exactly the same proportion (180) were rowers. And in the *galeazza* described by Pietro Martire the oars were used only as an occasional auxiliary (see his *Legationis Babylonice Libri Tres*, appended to his 3 Decads concerning the New World; *Basil.* 1533, f. 77 *ver.*). (3) The galleys of the last century, with their great oars 50 feet long pulled by 6 or 7 men each, had 25 benches to the side, and only 4' 6" (French) gunnel-space to each oar (see *Mém. d'un Protest.* p. 434). I imagine that a smaller space would suffice for the 3 light oars of the mediæval system, so that this need scarcely be a difficulty in the face of the preceding evidence. Note also the *three hundred rowers* in Joinville's description quoted at p. lxix.

\* *Marino Sanuto*, p. 78. These titles occur also in the *Documenti d'Amore* of Fr. Barberino referred to at p. 110 of this volume:—

"Convienti qui manieri  
*Portolatti e prodieri*  
E presti galeotti  
Aver, e forti e dotti."

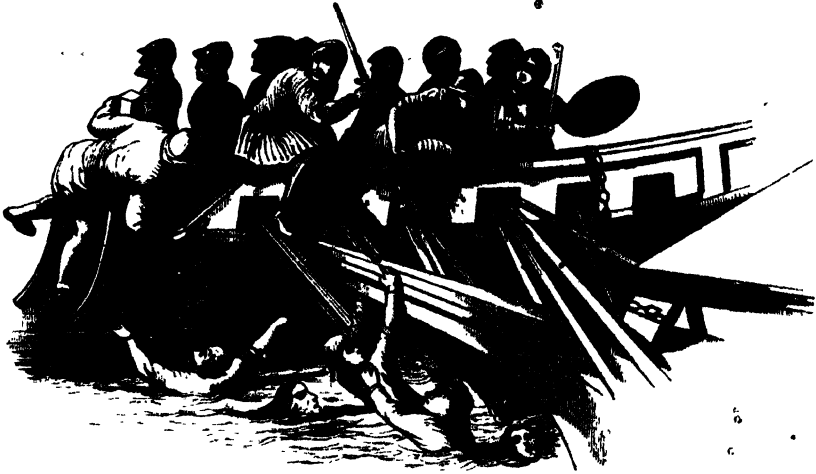
(Quoted in the *Vocab. Ital. Universale*.)

† Spinello's works, according to Vasari, extended from 1334 till late in the century. A religious picture of his at Siena is assigned to 1385, so the frescoes may probably be of about the same period.

‡ This is engraved in Jal's *Archéologie Navale*, f. 330; as are some other mediæval illustrations of the same circumstances.

the 16th century, which shows the arrangement of the oars in *triplets* very plainly.

The following cut has been sketched from an engraving of a picture by Domenico Tintoretto in the Dogge's palace, representing, I believe, the same action as Spinello's fresco, but with the costume and construction of a later date. It shows however, very plainly, the projecting *opera-morta*, and the arrangement of the oars in fours, issuing through row-ports in high bulwarks.



Part of a Sea Fight, after Dom. Tintoretto.

28. Midships in the medieval galley a castle was erected, of the width of the ship, and some 20 feet in length ; its platform being elevated sufficiently to allow of free passage under it and over the benches. At the bow was the battery, consisting of mangonels (see vol. ii. pp. 121. *seqq.*) and great cross-bows with winding gear,\* whilst

Fighting  
arrange-  
ments.

\* To these Casoni adds *Sifoni* for discharging Greek fire ; but this he seems to take from the Greek treatise of the Emperor Leo. Though I have introduced it in the cut at p. lxxvii, I doubt if there is evidence of its use by the Italians in the thirteenth century. Joinville describes it like something strange and new.

Great beams, hung like battering rams, are mentioned by Senuto, as well as iron crow's-feet with fire attached, to shoot among the rigging, and jars of quick-lime and soft soap to fling in the eyes of the enemy. The *limx* is said to have been used by Doria against the Venetians at Curzola (*infra*, p. lxxvi), and seems to have been a usual provision. Francesco Barberini specifies among the stores for his galley :—“ *Calcina*, con lancioni, Pèce, pietre, e ronconi ” (p. 259). And Christine de Pisan, in her *Fais du Sage Roy Charles* (V. of France) explains also

there were shot ports\* for smaller cross-bows along the gunnels in the intervals between the benches. Some of the larger galleys had openings to admit horses at the stern, which were closed and caulked for the voyage, being under water when the vessel was at sea.†

It seems to have been a very usual piece of tactics, in attacking as well as in awaiting attack, to connect a large number of galleys by hawsers, and sometimes also to link the oars together, so as to render it difficult for the enemy to break the line or run aboard. We find this practised by the Genoese on the defensive at the battle of Ayas (*infra*, p. lxxi), and it is constantly resorted to by the Catalans in the battles described by Ramon de Muntaner.‡

Sanuto says the toil of rowing in the galleys was excessive, almost unendurable. Yet it seems to have been performed by freely-enlisted men, and therefore it was probably less severe than that of the great-oared galleys of more recent times, which it was found impracticable to work by free enlistment, or otherwise than by slaves under the most cruel driving.§ I am not well enough read to say that war-galleys were never rowed by slaves in the Middle Ages, but the only doubtful allusion to such a class that I have met with is in one passage of Muntaner, where he says, describing the Neapolitan and Catalan fleets drawing together for action, that the gangs of the galleys had to toil like "forçats" (p. 313). Indeed, as regards Venice at least, convict rowers are stated to have been first introduced in 1549, previous to which the gangs were of *galeotti assoldati*.||

29. We have already mentioned that Sanuto requires for his three-banked galley a ship's company of 250 men. They are distributed as follows:—

Crew of a  
Galley and  
Staff of a  
Fleet.

the use of the soap: "*Item, on doit avoir plusieurs vaisseaulx legiers à rompre, comme pos plains de chaulx ou poudre, et gecter dedens; et par ce seront comme avuglez au brisier des poz. Item, on doit avoir autres pos de mol savon et gecter es nefz des adversaires, et quant les vaisseaulx brisent, le savon est glissant, si ne se peuvent en piez sous tenir, et chiéent en l'eau*" (pt. ii. ch. 38).

\* *Balistaria*, whence no doubt our *Balustrade*. Wedgwood's etymology is far-fetched.

† *Sanuto*, p. 53; *Joinville*, p. 40; *Muntaner*, 316, 403.

‡ See pp. 270, 288, 324, and especially 346.

§ See the *Proteus*, cited above, pp. 441, et *seppa*.

|| *Veneziane le que Legune*, ii. 52.

<i>Comito</i> or Master .. .. .	1
Quartermasters .. .. .	8
Carpenters .. .. .	2
Caulkers .. .. .	2
In charge of stores and arms .. .. .	4
Orderlies .. .. .	2
Cook .. .. .	1
Arblasteaders .. .. .	50
Rowers .. .. .	180
	<hr/>
	250*

This does not include the *Sopracomito*, or Gentleman-Commander, who was expected to be *valens homo et probus*, a soldier and a gentleman, fit to be consulted on occasion by the captain-general. In the Venetian fleet he was generally a noble.†

The aggregate pay of such a crew, not including the *sopracomito*, amounted monthly to 60 *lire de' grossi*, or 600 florins, equivalent to 280*l.* at modern gold value; and the cost for a year to nearly 3160*l.*, exclusive of the victualling of the vessel and the pay of the gentleman-commander. The build or purchase of a galley complete is estimated by the same author at 15,000 florins, or 7012*l.*

We see that war cost a good deal in money even then.

Besides the ship's own complement Sanuto gives an estimate for the general staff of a fleet of 60 galleys. This consists of a captain-general, two (vice) admirals, and the following:—

6 <i>Probi homines</i> , or gentlemen of character, forming a council to the Captain-General;	15 Master Smiths;
4 Commissaries of Stores;	12 Master Fletchers;
2 Commissaries over the Arms;	5 Cuirass men and Helmet-makers;
3 Physicians;	15 Oar-makers and Shaft-makers;
3 Surgeons;	10 Stone-cutters for stone shot;
5 Master Engineers and Carpenters;	10 Master Arblast-makers;
	20 Musicians;
	20 Orderlies, &c.

30. The musicians formed an important part of the equipment. Sanuto says that in going into action every vessel should make the greatest possible display of colours; gonfalons and broad banners should float from stem to stern, and gay pennons all along the bulwarks; whilst it was impossible to have too much of noisy music, of pipes,

Music; and other particulars.

\* *Mar. Sanuto*, p. 75.

† *Ibid.* p. 38.

trumpets, kettle-drums, and what not, to put heart into the crew and strike fear into the enemy.\*

So Joinville, in a glorious passage, describes the galley of his kinsman, the Count of Jaffa, at the landing of St. Lewis in Egypt :—

“That galley made the most gallant figure of them all, for it was painted all over, above water and below, with scutcheons of the count's arms, the field of which was *or* with a cross *patée gules*.† He had a good 300 rowers in his galley, and every man of them had a target blazoned with his arms in beaten gold. And, as they came on, the galley looked to be some flying creature, with such spirit did the rowers spin it along ;— or rather, with the rattle of its flags, and the roar of its nacaires and drums and Saracen horns, you might have taken it for a rushing bolt of heaven.”‡

The galleys, which were very low in the water,§ could not keep the sea in rough weather, and in winter they never willingly kept the sea at night, however fair the weather might be. Yet Sanuto mentions that he had been with armed galleys to Sluys in Flanders.

I will mention two more particulars before concluding this digression. When captured galleys were towed into port it was stern foremost, and with their colours dragging on the surface of the sea.|| And the custom of saluting at sunset (probably by music) was in vogue on board the galleys of the 13th century.¶

We shall now sketch the circumstances that led to the appearance of our Traveller in the command of a war-galley.

\* The Catalan Admiral Roger de Loria, advancing at daybreak to attack the Provençal Fleet of Charles of Naples (1283) in the harbour of Malta, “did a thing which should be reckoned to him rather as an act of madness,” says Muntaner, “than of reason. He said, ‘God forbid that I should attack them, all asleep as they are ! Let the trumpets and nacaires sound to awaken them, and I will tarry till they be ready for action. No man shall have it to say, if I beat them, that it was by catching them asleep.’” (*Munt.* p. 287.)

† A cross *patée*, is one with the extremities broadened out into *feet* as it were.

‡ Page 50.

§ The galley at p. lxxvii is somewhat too high ; and I believe it should have had no *shrouds*.

|| See *Muntaner*, passim, e.g. 271, 286, 315, 349.

¶ *Ibid.* 346.

VI. THE JEALOUSIES AND NAVAL WARS OF VENICE AND GENOA.  
 LAMBA DORIA'S EXPEDITION TO THE ADRIATIC; BATTLE OF  
 CURZOLA; AND IMPRISONMENT OF MARCO POLO BY THE  
 GENOESE.

31. Jealousies, too characteristic of the Italian communities, were, in the case of the three great trading republics of Venice, Genoa, and Pisa, aggravated by commercial rivalries, whilst, between the two first of those states, and also between the two last, the bitterness of such feelings had been augmenting during the whole course of the 13th century.\*

Growing  
 jealousies  
 and out-  
 breaks be-  
 tween the  
 Republics.

The brilliant part played by Venice in the conquest of Constantinople (1204), and the preponderance she thus acquired on the Greek shores, stimulated her arrogance and the resentment of her rivals. The three states no longer stood on a level as bidders for the shifting favour of the Emperor of the East. By treaty, not only was Venice established as the most important ally of the empire and as mistress of a large fraction of its territory, but all members of nations at war with her were prohibited from entering its limits. Though the Genoese colonies continued to exist, they stood at a great disadvantage, where their rivals were so predominant, and enjoyed exemption from duties, to which the Genoese remained subject. Hence jealousies and resentments reached a climax in the Levantine settlements, and this colonial exacerbation re-acted on the mother States.

A dispute which broke out at Acre in 1255 came to a head in a war which lasted for years, and was felt all over Syria. It began in a quarrel about a very old church called St. Sabba's, which stood on the common boundary of the Venetian and Genoese estates in Acre,† and this flame was blown by other unlucky occurrences. Acre suffered grievously.‡ Venice

\* In this part of these notices I am repeatedly indebted to *Heyd*; see *supra*, p. xli.

† On or close to the Hill called *Monjoie*; see the plan from Marino Sanuto at p. 17.

‡ "Throughout that year there were not less than 40 machines all at work upon the city of Acre, battering its houses and its towers, and smashing and overthrowing everything within their range. There were at least ten of those engines that shot stones so big and heavy that they weighed a good 1500 lbs. by

at this time generally kept the upper hand, beating Genoa by land and sea, and driving her from Acre altogether. Two ancient pillars from St. Sabba's were sent in triumph to Venice, and with their strange devices still stand at the door of St. Mark's towards the Ducal Palace.\*

But no number of defeats could extinguish the spirit of Genoa, and the tables were turned when in her wrath she allied herself with Michael Palacologus to upset the feeble and tottering Latin Dynasty, and with it the preponderance of Venice on the Bosphorus. The new emperor handed over to his allies the castle of their foes, which they tore down with jubilation, and now it was their turn to send its stones as trophies to Genoa. Mutual hate waxed fiercer than ever; no merchant fleet of either state could go to sea without convoy, and wherever their ships met they fought.† It was something like the state of things between Spain and England in the days of Drake.

The energy and capacity of the Genoese seemed to rise with their success, and both in seamanship and in splendour they began almost to surpass their old rivals. The fall of Acre (1291), and the total expulsion of the Franks from Syria, in great measure barred the southern routes of Indian trade, whilst the predominance of Genoa in the Euxine more or less obstructed the free access of her rival to the northern routes by Trebizond and Tana.

32. Truces were made and renewed, but the old fire still smouldered. In the spring of 1294 it broke into flame, in consequence of the seizure in the Grecian seas of three Genoese vessels by a Venetian fleet. This led to an action with a Genoese convoy which sought redress. The fight took place off Ayas in the Gulf of Scanderoon,‡ and though the Genoese were inferior in strength by one-third they gained a signal victory, capturing all but three

Battle in  
Bay of Ayas  
in 1294.

the weight of Champagne; insomuch that nearly all the towers and forts of Acre were destroyed, and only the religious houses were left. And there were slain in this same war good 20,000 men on the two sides, but chiefly of Genoese and Spaniards." (*Lettre de Jean Pierre Sarrasin, in Michel's Joinville, p. 308.*)

\* The origin of these columns is however somewhat uncertain.

† In 1262, when a Venetian squadron was taken by the Greek fleet in alliance with the Genoese, the whole of the survivors of the captive crews were blinded by order of Palacologus (*Roman, II. 272*).

‡ See pp. 15, 41, and Plan of Ayas.



of the Venetian galleys, with rich cargoes, including that of Marco Basilio (or Basegio), the commodore.\*

This victory over their haughty foe was in its completeness evidently a surprise to the Genoese, as well as a source of immense exultation, which is vigorously expressed in a ballad of the day, written in a stirring salt-water rhythm.† It represents the Venetians, as they enter the bay, in arrogant mirth reviling the Genoese with very unsavoury epithets as having deserted their ships to sculk on shore. They are described as saying:—

“ Off they’ve slunk ! and left us nothing ;  
We shall get nor prize nor praise ;  
Nothing save those crazy timbers  
Only fit to make a blaze.”‡

So they advance carelessly—

“ On they come ! But lo their blunder !  
When our lads start up anon,  
Breaking out like unchained lions,  
With a roar, ‘ Fall on ! Fall on ! ’” §

After relating the battle and the thoroughness of the victory, ending in the conflagration of five and twenty captured galleys, the poet concludes by an admonition to the enemy to moderate his pride and curb his arrogant tongue, harping on the obnoxious epithet *porci leproxi*, which seems to have galled the Genoese.¶ He concludes:—

“ Nor can I at all remember  
Ever to have heard the story  
Of a fight wherein the Victors  
Reaped so rich a meed of glory !” †

\* See *Archivio Storico Italiano*, Appendice, tom. iv.

† *Niente ne resta a prender  
Se no li corpi de li legni :  
Prexi som senza difender ;  
De bruxar som tute degni !*

*Como li som apro vicini  
Quelli si levan lantor  
Como leon descaenai  
Tuti criando “ Alor ! Alor ! ”*

This *Alor ! Alor !* (“Up, Boys, and at ’em”), or something similar, appears to have been the usual war-cry of both parties. In a galley fight at Tyre in 1258, according to a Latin narrative, the Genoese shout “Ad arma, ad arma ! *ad ipsos, ad ipsos !*” The cry of the Venetians, before engaging the Greeks is represented by Martino da Canale, in his old French, as “*or à yaus ! or à yaus !*” that of the Genoese on another occasion as *Aur ! Aur !* and this last is the shout of the Catalans also in Ramon de Muntaner. (*Archiv. Stor. Ital.* viii. 364, 566 ; *Pertz, Script.* xviii. 239 ; *Muntaner*, 269, 287.)

‡ *E no me posso dragondar  
Dhucuno romanzo vertade  
“Donde oyse uncha colntar  
Alcun triumpho di soord !*

The community of Genoa decreed that the victory should be commemorated by the annual presentation of a golden pall to the monastery of St. German's, the saint on whose feast (28th May) it had been won.\*

The startling news was received at Venice with wrath and grief, for the flower of their navy had perished, and all energies were bent at once to raise an overwhelming force. The Pope (Boniface VIII.) interfered as mediator, and truces and tentatives from both sides. But the flames, and this mediation came to naught.

Further outrages on both sides occurred in 1296. The Genoese residences at Pera were fired, their great alum works on the coast of Anatolia were devastated, and Caffa was stormed and sacked; whilst on the other hand a number of the Venetians at Constantinople were massacred by the Genoese, and Marco Bembo their Bailo was flung from a house-top. Amid such events the fire of enmity between the cities waxed hotter and hotter.

33. In 1298 the Genoese made elaborate preparations for a great blow at the enemy, and fitted out a powerful fleet which they placed under the command of LAMBA DORIA, a younger brother of Uberto of that illustrious house, under whom he had served fourteen years before in the great rout of the Pisans at Meloria.

Lamba Doria's Expedition to the Adriatic.

The rendezvous of the fleet was in the Gulf of Spezia, as we learn from the same pithy Genoese poet who celebrated Ayas. This time the Genoese were bent on bearding St Mark's Lion in his own den; and after touching at Messina they steered straight for the Adriatic:—

“ Now, as astern Otranto bears,  
Pull with a will! and, please the Lord,  
Let them who bragged, with fire and sword,  
To waste our homesteads, look to theirs!” †

\* *Stella in Muratori*, xvii. 984.

† *Dandolo*, *Ibid.* xii. 404—

‡

*Or entram con gran vigor,  
En De sperando aver triumpho,  
Quelli cercando inter lo Gorfo  
Chi menaerem vercha lor!*

And in the next verse note the pure Scotch use of the word *bra* :—

*Sichè da Otranto se partim  
Quella bra compagna,  
Per passar in l'havonia,  
D' Avosto a vinte nove di.*

On their entering the gulf a great storm dispersed the fleet. The admiral with twenty of his galleys got into port at Antivari on the Albanian coast, and next day was rejoined by fifty-eight more, with which he scoured the Dalmatian shore, plundering all Venetian property. Some sixteen of his galleys were still missing when he reached the island of Curzola, or Scurzola as the more popular name seems to have been, the Black Corcyra of the Ancients—the chief town of which, a rich and flourishing place, the Genoese took and burned.\* Thus they were engaged when word came that the Venetian fleet was in sight.

Venice, on first hearing of the Genoese armament, sent Andrea Dandolo with a large force to join and supersede Maffeo Quirini, who was already cruizing with a squadron in the Ionian sea; and, on receiving further information of the strength of the hostile expedition, the Signory hastily equipped thirty-two more galleys in Chioggia and the ports of Dalmatia, and despatched them to join Dandolo, making the whole number under his command up to something like ninety-five. Recent drafts had apparently told heavily upon the Venetian sources of enlistment, and it is stated that many of the complements were made up of rustics swept in haste from the Euganean hills. To this the Genoese poet seems to allude, alleging that the Venetians, in spite of their haughty language, had to go begging for men and money up and down Lombardy. "Did *we* do like that think you?" he adds:—

"Beat up for aliens? *We* indeed?  
When lacked we homeborn Genoese?  
Search all the seas, no salts like these,  
For Courage, Seacraft, Wit at need."†

Of one of the Venetian galleys, probably in the fleet

\* The island of Curzola now contains about 4000 inhabitants; the town half the number. It was probably reckoned a dependency of Venice at this time. The King of Hungary had renounced his claims on the Dalmatian coasts by treaty in 1244 (*Romanin*, ii. 235).

†  
*Ma se si gran colmo avea  
Perchè andava mendigando  
Per terra de Lombardia  
Paccunin, gente a sodi?  
Pone mente tu che t'odi  
Se noi tegnamo questa via?*

*No, ma' più l'ajamo omi nostrar  
Destri, valenti, e audaci,  
Che mai par de lor n'è visti  
In tuti officj de mar.*

which sailed under Dandolo's immediate command, went Marco Polo as *Sopracomito* or Gentleman-Commander.\*

34. It was on the afternoon of Saturday the 6th September that the Genoese saw the Venetian fleet approaching, but, as sunset was not far off, both sides tacitly agreed to defer the engagement.†

The Fleets  
come in sight  
of each other  
at Curzola.

The Genoese would appear to have occupied a position near the eastern end of the Island of Curzola, with the Peninsula of Sabbioncello behind them, and Meleda on their left, whilst the Venetians advanced along the south side of Curzola (see map on p. xlv).

According to Venetian accounts the Genoese were staggered at the sight of the Venetian armaments, and sent more than once to seek terms, offering finally to surrender galleys and munitions of war, if the crews were allowed to depart. This is an improbable story, and that of the Genoese ballad seems more like truth. Doria, it says, held a council of his captains in the evening at which they all voted for attack, whilst the Venetians, with that overweening sense of superiority which at this time is reflected in their own annals as distinctly as in those of their enemies, kept scout-vessels out to watch

\* In July, 1294, a Council of Thirty decreed that galleys should be equipped by the richest families in proportion to their wealth. Among the families held to equip one galley each, or one galley among two or more, in this list, is the CA' POLO. But this was before the return of the travellers from the East, and just after the battle of Ayas (*Romanin*, ii. 332; this author mislates Ayas, however). When a levy was required in Venice for any expedition the heads of each *contrada* divided the male inhabitants, between the ages of twenty and sixty, into groups of twelve each, called *duodene*. The dice were thrown to decide who should go first on service. He who went received five *lire* a month from the State, and one *lira* from each of his colleagues in the *duodena*. Hence his pay was sixteen *lire* a month, about 2s. a day, if these were *lire a grossi*, or 1s. 4d. if *lire dei piccoliti* (see *Romanin*, i. 321).

Money on such occasions was frequently raised by what was called an *Estimo* or *Facion*, which was a forced loan levied on the citizens in proportion to their estimated wealth; and for which they were entitled to interest from the State.

† Several of the Italian chroniclers, as Ferreto of Vicenza and Navagiero, whom Muratori has followed in his 'Annals,' say the battle was fought on the 8th September, the so-called Birthday of the Madonna. But the inscription on the Church of St. Matthew at Genoa, cited further on, says the 7th, and with this agree both Stella and the Genoese poet. For the latter, though not specifying the day of the month, says it was on a Sunday:—

"Lo dì de Domenga era  
Passa prima en l'ur bona  
Stormesam fin provo' nona  
Con bataio forte e fers."

Now the 7th September 1298 fell on a Sunday.

that the Genoese fleet, which they looked on, as already their own, did not steal away in the darkness. A vain imagination, says the poet :—

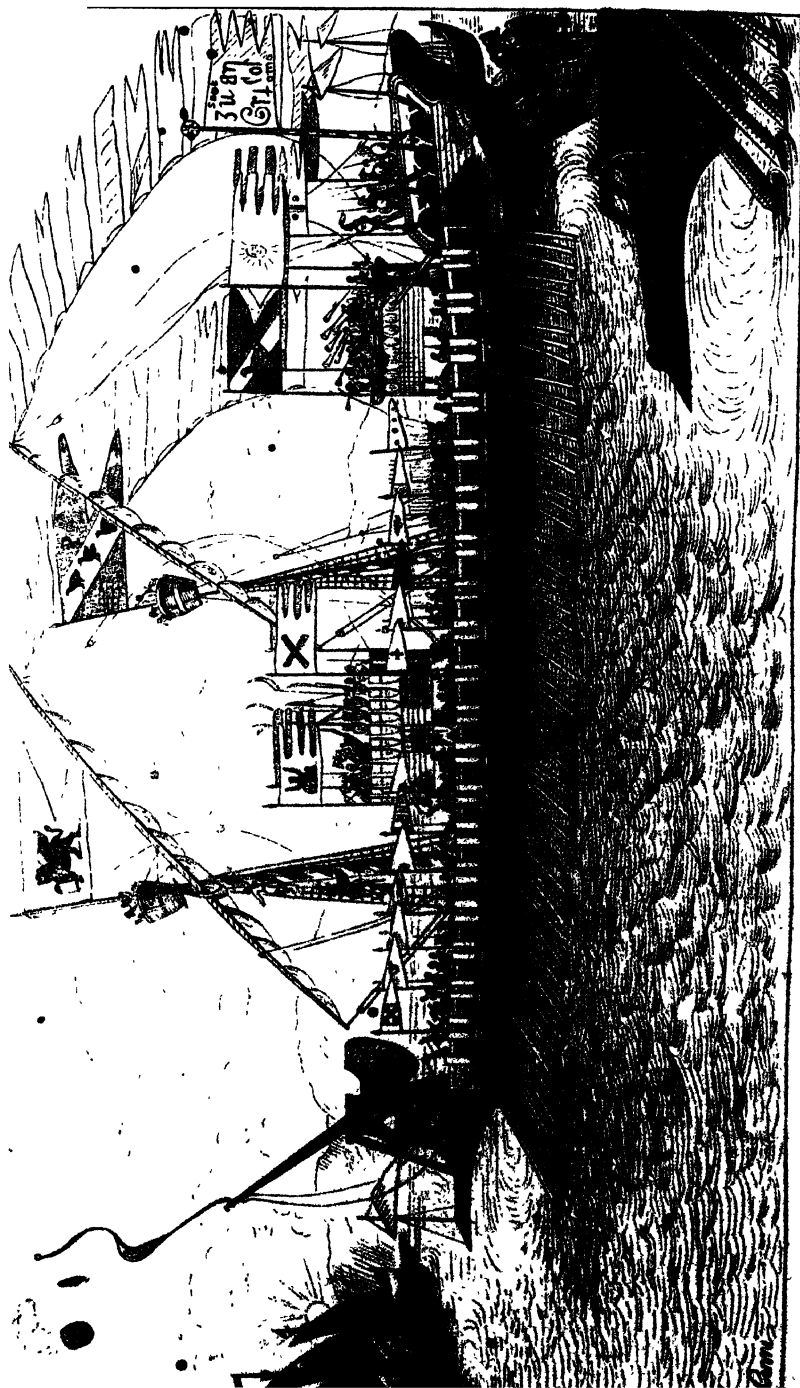
“ Blind error of vain glorious men  
To dream that we should seek to flee  
After those weary leagues of sea  
Crossed, but to hunt them in their den ! ” \*

35. The battle began early on Sunday and lasted till the afternoon. The Venetians had the wind in their favour, but the morning sun in their eyes. They made the attack, and with great impetuosity, capturing ten Genoese galleys; but they pressed on too wildly, and some of their vessels ran aground. One of their galleys too, being taken, was cleared of her crew and turned against the Venetians. These incidents caused confusion among the assailants; the Genoese, who had begun to give way, took fresh heart, formed a close column, and advanced boldly through the Venetian line, already in disorder. The sun had begun to decline when there appeared on the Venetian flank the fifteen or sixteen missing galleys of Doria's fleet, and fell upon it with fresh force. This decided the action. The Genoese gained a complete victory, capturing all but a few of the Venetian galleys, and including the flagship with Dandolo. The Genoese themselves lost heavily, especially in the early part of the action, and Lamba Doria's eldest son Octavian is said to have fallen on board his father's vessel.†

The Venetians defeated, and Marco Polo a prisoner.

\* *Ma li pensavam grande error  
Che in fuga se fussem tuti metui  
Che de si sonzi eram vegnui  
Per cerchali a casa lor !*

† “ Note here that the Genoese generally, commonly, and by nature, are the most covetous of Men, and the Love of Gain spurs them to every Crime. Yet are they deemed also the most valiant Men in the World. Such an one was Lampa, of that very Doria family, a man of an high Courage truly. For when he was engaged in a Sea-Fight against the Venetians, and was standing on the Poop of his Galley, his Son, fighting valiantly at the Forecastle, was shot by an Arrow in the Breast, and fell wounded to the Death; a Mishap whereat his Comrades were sorely shaken, and Fear came upon the whole Ship's Company. But Lampa, hot with the Spirit of Battle, and more mindful of his Country's Service and his own Glory than of his Son, ran forward to the spot, loftily rebuked the agitated Crowd, and ordered his Son's Body to be cast into the Deep, telling them for their Comfort that the Land could never have afforded his Boy a nobler Tomb. And then, renewing the Fight more fiercely than ever, he achieved the Victory.” (*Benvenuto of Imola, in Comment. on Dante, in Muratori, Antiq. i. 1146.*)

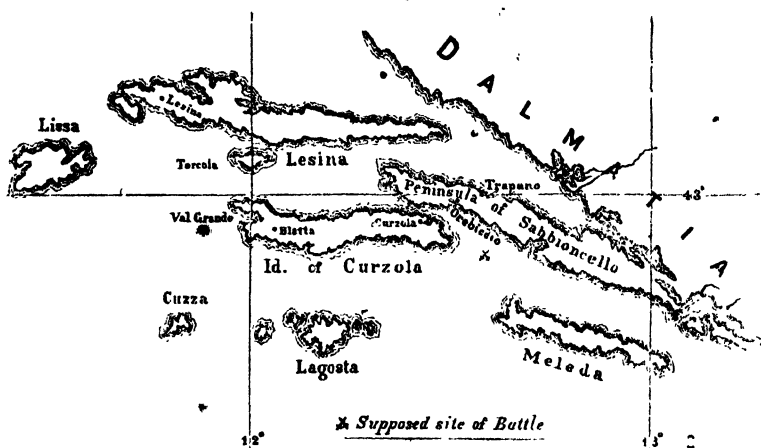


Marco Polo's Galley going into action at Curzola.

## INTRODUCTION.

The number of prisoners taken was over 7000, and among these was Marco Polo.\*

The prisoners, even of the highest rank, appear to have been chained. Dandolo, in despair at his defeat, and at the prospect of being carried captive into Genoa, refused food, and ended by dashing his head against a bench.† A Genoese account asserts that a noble funeral was given him after the arrival of the fleet at Genoa, which took place on the evening of the 16th October.‡ It was received with great rejoicing,



Scene of the Battle of Curzola.

and the City voted the annual presentation of a pallium of gold brocade to the altar of the Virgin in the Church of St. Matthew, on every 8th of September, the Madonna's day, on the eve of which the Battle had been won. To the admiral himself a Palace was decreed. It still stands, opposite the Church of S. Matthew, though it has passed from the posses-

\* The particulars of the battle are gathered from *Ferretus Vicentinus*, in *Murat.* ix. 985 *segg.*; *And. Dandolo*, in xii. 407-8; *Navagiero*, in xxiii. 1009-10; and the Genoese Poem as before.

† *Navagiero*, u. 2. Dandolo says, "after a few days he died of grief;" *Ferretus*, that he was killed in the action and buried at Curzola.

‡ For the funeral, a MS. of Cibo Recco quoted by *Jacopo Doria* in *La chiesa di San Matteo descritta*, &c., Genova, 1860, p. 26. For the date of arrival the poem so often quoted:—

"De Oidover, a zola, a seze di  
Lo nostro ostel, con gran festa  
En nostro porto, a or di seata  
Thamino The venetian"

sion of the Family. On the striped marble façades, both of the Church and of the Palace, inscriptions of that age, in excellent preservation, still commemorate Lamba's achievement.\*

The latter died at Savona 17th October, 1323, a few months before the most illustrious of his prisoners, and his bones were laid in a sarcophagus which may still be seen forming the sill of one of the windows of S. Matteo (on the right as you enter). Over this sarcophagus stood the Bust of Lamba till 1797, when the mob of Genoa, in idiotic imitation of the French proceedings of that age, threw it down. All of Lamba's six sons had fought with him at Meloria. In 1291 one of them, Tedisio, went forth into the Atlantic in company with Ugolino Vivaldi on a voyage of discovery, and never returned. Through Cæsar, the youngest, this branch of the Family still survives, bearing the distinctive surname of *Lamba-Doria*.†

As to the treatment of the prisoners, accounts differ; a thing usual in such cases. The Genoese Poet asserts that the hearts of his countrymen were touched, and that the captives were treated with compassionate courtesy. Navagiero the Venetian, on the other hand, declares that most of them died of hunger.‡

\* S. Matteo was built by Martin Doria in 1125, but pulled down and rebuilt by the family in a slightly different position in 1278. On this occasion is recorded a remarkable anticipation of the feats of American engineering: "As there was an ancient and very fine picture of Christ upon the apse of the Church, it was thought a great pity that so fine a work should be destroyed. And so they contrived an ingenious method by which the apse bodily was transported without injury, picture and all, for a distance of 25 ells, and firmly set upon the foundations where it now exists." (*Jacopo de Varagine in Muratori*, vol. ix. 36.)

The inscription on S. Matteo regarding the battle is as follows:—*Ad Honorem Dei et Beate Virginis Marie Anno MCCLXXXVIII Die Dominico VII Septembris iste Angelus captus fuit in Gulfo Vendiarum in Civitate Scursole et ibidem fuit prelium Galearum LXXVI Januensium cum Galeis LXXXVI Veneciarum. Capte fuerunt LXXXIII per Nobilem Virum Dominum Lambam Aurie Capitaneum et Armiratum tunc Comunis et Populi Janue cum omnibus existentibus in eisdem, de quibus conduxit Janue homines vivos carceratis VII cccc et Galeas XVIII, reliquas LXVI fecit cumhuri in dicto Gulfo Veneciarum. Qui obiit Sagone I. MCCCXXIII.* It is not clear to what the *Angelus* refers.

† *Jacopo Doria*, p. 280.

‡ *Murat.* xliii. 1010. I learn from a Genoese gentleman, through my friend Prof. Henry Giglioli (to whose kindness I owe the transcript of the inscription just given), that a faint tradition exists as to the place of our traveller's imprisonment. It is alleged to have been a massive building standing between the *Grande* and the *Mole*, and bearing the name of the *Molaga*, which is now a barrack for Doganieri, but continued till comparatively recent times to be used as a civil prison. "It is certain," says my informant, "that men of fame in arms who had



36. Howsoever they may have been treated, here was Marco Polo one of those many thousand prisoners in Genoa; and here, before long, he appears to have made acquaintance with a man of literary propensities, whose destiny had brought him into the like plight, by name RUSTICIANO or RUSTICHELLO of Pisa. It was this person perhaps who persuaded the Traveller to defer no longer the reduction to writing of his notable experiences; but in any case it was he who wrote down those experiences at Marco's dictation; it is he therefore to whom we owe the preservation of this record, and possibly even that of the Traveller's very memory. This makes the Genoese imprisonment so important an episode in Polo's biography.

To Rusticiano we shall presently recur. But let us first bring to a conclusion what may be gathered as to the duration of Polo's imprisonment.

It does not appear whether Pope Boniface made any new effort for accommodation between the Republics; but other Italian princes did interpose, and Matteo Visconti, Captain-General of Milan, styling himself Vicar-General of the Holy Roman Empire in Lombardy, was accepted as Mediator, along with the community of Milan. Ambassadors from both States presented themselves at that city, and on the 25th May, 1299, they signed the terms of a Peace.

These terms were perfectly honourable to Venice, being absolutely equal and reciprocal; from which one is apt to conclude that the damage to the City of the Sea was rather to her pride than to her power; the success of Genoa, in fact, having been followed up by no systematic attack upon Venetian commerce.\* Among the terms was the mutual release of prisoners on a day to be fixed by Visconti after the com-

---

fallen into the power of the Genoese were imprisoned there, and among others is recorded the name of the Corsican Giudice dalla Rocca and Lord of Cinarca, who died there in 1312;" a date so near that of Marco's imprisonment as to give some interest to the hypothesis, slender as are its grounds. Another Genoese, however, indicates as the scene of Marco's captivity certain old prisons near the Old Arsenal, in a site still known as the *Vico degli Schiavi* (*Celesia, Dante in Liguria*, 1865, p. 43).

\* The Treaty and some subsidiary documents are printed in the Genoese *Liber Jurium*, forming a part of the *Monumenta Historiæ Patriæ*, published at Turin (see *Lib. Jur.* II. 344, *seqq.*). Muratori in his *Annals* has followed John Villani (*bk. viii. ch. 27*) in representing the terms as highly unfavourable to Venice. But for this there is no foundation in the documents. And the terms are stated with substantial accuracy in Navagiero (*Mural. Script.* xxiii. 1011).

pletion of all formalities. This day is not recorded, but as the Treaty was ratified by the Doge of Venice on the 1st July, and the latest extant document connected with the formalities appears to be dated 18th July, we may believe that before the end of August Marco Polo was restored to the family mansion in S. Giovanni Grisostomo.

37. Something further requires to be said before quitting this event in our Traveller's life. For we confess that a critical reader may have some justification in asking what evidence there is that Marco Polo ever fought at Curzola, and ever was carried a prisoner to Genoa from that unfortunate action ?

Grounds on which the story of Marco Polo's capture at Curzola rests.

A learned Frenchman, whom we shall have to quote freely in the immediately ensuing pages, does not venture to be more precise in reference to the meeting of Polo and Rusticiano than to say of the latter : " In 1298, being in durance in the Prison of Genoa, he there became acquainted with Marco Polo, whom the Genoese had deprived of his liberty from motives equally unknown." \*

To those who have no relish for biographies that round the meagre skeleton of authentic facts with a plump padding of what *might have been*, this sentence of M. Paulin-Paris is quite refreshing in its stern limitation to positive knowledge. And certainly no contemporary authority has yet been found for the capture of our Traveller at Curzola. Still I think that the fact is beyond reasonable doubt.

Ramusio's biographical notices certainly contain many errors of detail ; and some, such as the many years' interval which he sets between the Battle of Curzola and Marco's return, are errors which a very little trouble would have enabled him to eschew. But still it does seem reasonable to believe that the main fact of Marco's command of a galley at Curzola, and capture there, was derived from a genuine tradition, if not from documents.

Let us then turn to the words which close Rusticiano's preamble (see *post*, p. 2) :—" Lequel (Messire Marc) puis demorant en le charthre de Jene fist retraire toutes cestes chouses a Messire Rusticians de Pise que en celle meissme charthre

\* Paulin-Paris, *Les Manuscrits François de la Bibliothèque du Roi*, ii. 355.  
VOL. I.

estoit, au tens qu'il avoit 1298 anz que Jezu eut vesqui." These words are at least thoroughly consistent with Marco's capture at Curzola, as regards both the position in which they present him, and the year in which he is thus presented.

There is however another piece of evidence, though it is curiously indirect.

The Dominican Friar Jacopo of Acqui was a contemporary of Polo's, and was the author of a somewhat obscure Chronicle called *Imago Mundi*.\* Now this Chronicle does contain mention of Marco's capture in action by the Genoese, but attributes it to a different action from Curzola, and one fought at a time when Polo could not have been present. The passage runs as follows in a manuscript of the Ambrosian Library, according to an extract given by Baldello Boni :—

" In the year of Christ MCCLXXXVI, in the time of Pope Boniface VI., of whom we have spoken above, a battle was fought in Arminia, at the place called Layaz, between xv. galleys of Genoese merchants and xxv. of Venetian merchants ; and after a great fight the galleys of the Venetians were beaten, and (the crews) all slain or taken ; and among them was taken Messer Marco the Venetian, who was in company with those merchants, and who was called *Milono*, which is as much as to say 'a thousand thousand pounds,' for so goes the phrase in Venice. So this Messer Marco Milono the Venetian, with the other Venetian prisoners, is carried off to the prison of Genoa, and there kept for a long time. This Messer Marco was a long time with his father and uncle in Tartary, and he there saw many things, and made much wealth, and also learned many things, for he was a man of ability. And so, being in prison at Genoa, he made a Book concerning the great wonders of the World, *i. e.*, concerning such of them as he had seen. And what he told in the Book was not as much as he had really seen, because of the tongues of detractors, who, being ready to impose their own lies on others, are over hasty to set down as lies what they in their perversity disbelieve, or do not understand. And because there are many great and strange things in that Book, which are reckoned past all credence, he was asked by his friends on his death-bed to correct the Book by removing everything that went beyond the facts. To which his reply was that he had not told *one-half* of what he had really seen !" †

\* Though there is no precise information as to the birth or death of this writer, who belonged to a noble family of Lombardy, the Bellingeri, he can be traced with tolerable certainty as in life in 1289, 1320, and 1334 (see the Introduction to his Chronicle in the Turin *Monumenta, Scriptores* III.).

† There is another MS. of the *Imago Mundi* at Turin, which has been printed in the *Monumenta*. The passage about Polo in that copy differs widely in wording, is much shorter, and contains no date. But it relates his capture as having taken place at *La Glasa*, which I think there can be no doubt is also intended for *Ayas* (sometimes called *Giazza*) a place which in fact is called *Glasa* in three of the MSS. of which various readings are given in the edition of the Société de Géographie (p. 535).

This statement regarding the capture of Marco *at the Battle of Ayas* is one which cannot be true, for we know that he did not reach Venice till 1295, travelling from Persia by way of Trebizond and the Bosphorus, whilst the Battle of Ayas, of which we have purposely given some detail, was fought in May, 1294. The date MCLXXXVI assigned to it in the preceding extract has given rise to some unprofitable discussion. Could that date be accepted, no doubt it would enable us also to accept this, the sole statement from the Traveller's own age of the circumstances which brought him into a Genoese prison; it would enable us to place that imprisonment within a few months of his return from the East, and to extend its duration to three years, points which would thus accord better with the general tenor of Ramusio's tradition than the capture at Curzola. But the matter is not open to such a solution. The date of the Battle of Ayas is not more doubtful than that of the Battle of the Nile. It is clearly stated by several independent chroniclers, and is carefully established in the Ballad that we have quoted above. We shall see repeatedly in the course of this Book how uncertain are the transcriptions of dates in Roman numerals, and in the present case the LXXXVI is as certainly a mistake for LXXXIV, as is Boniface VI. in the same quotation a mistake for Boniface VIII.

But though we cannot accept the statement that Polo was taken prisoner *at Ayas, in the spring of 1294*, we may accept the passage as evidence from a contemporary source that he was *taken prisoner in some sea-fight with the Genoese*, and thus admit it in corroboration of the Ramusian Tradition of his capture in a sea-fight at Curzola in 1298, which is perfectly consistent with all other facts in our possession.

VII. RUSTICIANO OR RUSTICHELLO OF PISA, MARCO POLO'S FELLOW-PRISONER AT GENOA, THE SCRIBE WHO WROTE DOWN THE TRAVELS.

38. We have now to say something of that Rusticiano to whom all who value Polo's book are so much indebted.

The relations between Genoa and Pisa had long been so hostile that it was only too natural in 1298

Rusticiano, perhaps a prisoner from Meloria.

to find a Pisan in the gaol of Genoa. An unhappy multitude of such prisoners had been carried thither fourteen years before, and the survivors still lingered there in vastly dwindled numbers. In the summer of 1284 was fought the battle from which Pisa had to date the commencement of her long decay. In July of that year the Pisans, at a time when the Genoese had no fleet in their own immediate waters, had advanced to the very port of Genoa and shot their defiance into the proud city in the form of silver-headed arrows, and stones belted with scarlet.\* They had to pay dearly for this insult. The Genoese, recalling their cruizers, speedily mustered a fleet of eighty-eight galleys, which were placed under the command of another of that illustrious House of Doria, the Scipios of Genoa, as they have been called, Uberto, the elder brother of Lamba. Lamba himself with his six sons, and another brother, was in the fleet, whilst the whole number of Dorias who fought in the ensuing action amounted to 250, most of them on board one great galley bearing the name of the family patron St. Matthew.†

The Pisans, more than one-fourth inferior in strength, came out boldly, and the battle was fought off the Porto Pisano, in fact close in front of Leghorn, where a lighthouse on a remarkable arched basement still marks the islet of MELORIA, whence the battle got its name. The day was the 6th of August, the feast of St. Sixtus, a day memorable in the Pisan Fasti for several great victories. But on this occasion the defeat of Pisa was overwhelming. Forty of their galleys were taken or sunk, and upwards of 9000 prisoners carried to Genoa. In fact so vast a sweep was made of the flower of Pisan manhood, that it was a common saying then: "*Che vuol veder Pisa, vada a Genova!*" Many noble ladies of Pisa went in large companies on foot to Genoa to seek their

\* *B. Marangone, Croniche della C. di Pisa*, in *Rerum Ital. Script.* of Tartini, Florence, 1748, i. 563; *Dal Borgo, Dissert. sopra l'Istoria Pisana*, ii. 287.

† The list of the whole number is preserved in the Doria archives, and has been published by Sign. Jacopo Doria. Many of the baptismal names are curious, and show how far sponsors wandered from the Church Calendar. *Assan, Ailon, Turco, Soldan* seem to come of the constant interest in the East. *Alaone*, a name which remained in the family for several generations, I had thought certainly borrowed from the fierce conqueror of the Khalif (*infra*, p. 60). But as one Alaone, present at this battle, had a son also there, he must surely have been christened before the same of Hulaku could have reached Genoa (see *La chiesa di S. Matteo*, pp. 250, seqq.).

husbands or kinsmen: "And when they made enquiry of the Keepers of the Prisons the reply would be, 'Yesterday there died thirty of them, to-day there have died forty; all of whom we have cast into the sea; and so it is daily.' " \*

A body of prisoners so numerous and important naturally exerted themselves in the cause of peace, and through their efforts, after many months of negotiation, a formal peace was signed (15th April, 1288).

But through the influence, as was alleged, of Count Ugolino (Dante's) who was then in power at Pisa, the peace became abortive; war almost immediately recommenced, and the prisoners had no release.† And, when the 6000 or 7000 Venetians were thrown into the prisons of Genoa in October 1298, they



al of the Pi i Prisoners

would find there the scanty surviving remnant of the

Pisan Prisoners of Meloria, and would gather from them dismal forebodings of the fate before them.

It is a fair conjecture that to that remnant Rusticiano of Pisa may have belonged.

We have seen Ramusio's representation of the kindness shown to Marco during his imprisonment by a certain Genoese gentleman, who also assisted him to reduce his travels to writing. We may be certain that this Genoese gentleman is only a distorted image of Rusticiano, the Pisan prisoner in the gaol of Genoa, whose name and part in the history of his hero's book Ramusio so strangely ignores. Yet patriotic Genoese

\* *Memorial. Potestat. Regiens.* in *Muratori*, viii. 1162.

† See *Fragm. Hist. Pisan.* in *Muratori*, xxiv. 651, *seqq.*; and *Caffaro*, *id.* vi. 588, 594-5. The cut in the text represents a striking memorial of those Pisan Prisoners which perhaps still survives, but which at any rate existed last century in a collection at Lucca. It is the seal of the Prisoners as a body corporate: SIGILLUM UNIVERSITATIS CARCERATORUM PISANORUM JANUE DETENTORUM, and was doubtless used in their negotiations for peace with the Genoese Commissioners. It represents two of the prisoners imploring the Madonna, Patron of the Duomo at Pisa. It is from *Manni, Osserv. Stor. sopra Sigilli Antichi*, &c., Firenze, 1739, tom. xii. The seal is also engraved in *Dal Borgo*, op. cit. ii. 316.

writers in our own times have striven to determine the identity of this their imaginary countryman !\*

39. Who, then, was Rusticiano, or, as the name actually is read in the oldest type of MS., "Messire Rusticians de

Rusticiano, Pise?"

Rusticiano,  
a person  
known from  
other  
sources.

Our knowledge of him is but scanty. Still something is known of him besides the few words concluding his preamble to our Traveller's Book, which you may read at p. 1-2 of this volume.

In Sir Walter Scott's "Essay on Romance," when he speaks of the new mould in which the subjects of the old metrical stories were cast by the school of prose romancers which arose in the 13th century, we find the following words :—

"Whatever fragments or shadows of true history may yet remain hidden under the mass of accumulated fable which had been heaped upon them during successive ages, must undoubtedly be sought in the metrical romances . . . . But those prose authors who wrote under the imaginary names of RUSTICIEN DE PISE, Robert de Borron, and the like, usually seized upon the subject of some old minstrel ; and recomposing the whole narrative after their own fashion, with additional character and adventure, totally obliterated in that operation any shades which remained of the original and probably authentic tradition," &c.†

Evidently, therefore, Sir Walter regarded Rustician of Pisa as a person belonging to the same ghostly company as his own Cleishbothams and Dryasdusts. „But in this we see that he was wrong.

In the great Paris Library and elsewhere there are manuscript volumes containing the stories of the Round Table abridged and somewhat clumsily combined from the various Prose Romances of that cycle, such as *Sir Tristan*, *Lancelot*, *Palamedes*, *Giron le Courtois*, &c., which had been composed, it would seem, by various Anglo-French gentlemen at the court of Henry III., styled Gasses le Blunt, Lucas de Gast, Robert de Borron, and Helye de Borron. And these abridgments or recasts are professedly the work of *Le Maistre*

\* The Abate Spotorno in his *Storia Letteraria della Liguria*, II. 219, fixes on a Genoese philosopher called Andalo del Negro, mentioned by Boccaccio.

† I quote from Galignani's ed. of *Prose Works*, v. 712. This has "Rusticien de Pise." In this view of the fictitious character of the names of Rusticien and the rest, Sir Walter seems to have been following Ritson, as I gather from a quotation in Dunlop's *H. of Fiction* (*Liebrecht's* German version, p. 63).

*Rusticien de Pise.* Several of them were printed at Paris in the end of the 15th and beginning of the 16th centuries as the works of Rusticien de Pise; and as the preambles and the like, especially as they are exhibited in those printed editions, appear to be due sometimes to the original composers (as Robert and Helye de Borron) and sometimes to Rusticien de Pise the recaster, there would seem to have been a good deal of confusion made in regard to their respective personalities.

From a preamble to one of those compilations which undoubtedly belongs to Rustician, and which we shall quote at length by and by, we learn that Master Rustician "translated" (or perhaps *transferred*?) his compilation from a book belonging to King Edward of England, at the time when that prince went beyond seas to recover the Holy Sepulchre. Now Prince Edward started for the Holy Land in 1270, spent the winter of that year in Sicily, and arrived in Palestine in May 1271. He quitted it again in August 1272, and passed again by Sicily, where in January 1273 he heard of his father's death and his own consequent accession. M. Paulin-Paris supposes that Rustician was attached to the Sicilian Court of Charles of Anjou, and that Edward "may have deposited with that king the Romances of the Round Table, of which all the world was talking, but the manuscripts of which were still very rare, especially those of the work of Helye de Borron\* . . . . whether by order, or only with permission, of the King of Sicily, our Rustician made haste to read, abridge, and re-arrange the whole, and when Edward returned to Sicily he recovered possession of the book from which the indefatigable Pisan had extracted the contents."

But this I believe is, in so far as it passes the facts stated in Rustician's own preamble, pure hypothesis, for nothing is cited that connects Rustician with the King of Sicily. And if there be not some such confusion of personality as we have alluded to in another of the preambles, which is quoted by Dunlop as an utterance of Rustician's, that personage would seem to claim to have been a comrade in arms of the two de Borrons. We might, therefore, conjecture that Rustician himself had accompanied Prince Edward to Syria.†

\* *Giron le Courtois*, and the conclusion of *Tristan*.

† The passage runs thus as quoted (from the preamble of the *Meliadus*—I suspect in one of the old printed editions):—



40. Rustician's literary work appears from the extracts and remarks of M. Paulin-Paris to be that of an industrious simple man, without method or much judgment. "The haste with which he worked is too perceptible; the adventures are told without connexion; you find long stories of Tristan followed by adventures of his father Meliadus." For the latter derangement of historical sequence we find a quaint and ingenuous apology offered in Rustician's epilogue to Giron le Courtois :—

Character of  
Rustician's  
Romance  
compilations.

"Cy fine le Maistre Rusticien de Pise son conte en louant et regrant le Père le Filz et le Saint Esperit, et ung mesme Dieu, Filz de la Benoite Vierge Marie, de ce qu'il m'a doné grace, sens, force, et mémoire, temps et lieu, de me mener à fin de si haulte et si noble matière come cest-cy dont j'ay traicté les faiz et les proesses recitez, et recordez à mon livre. Et se aucun me demandeoit pourquoy j'ay parlé de Tristran avant que de son père le Roy Meliadus, le respons que ma matière n'estoist pas congneue. Car je ne puis pas scâvoir tout, ne mettre toutes mes paroles par ordre. Et ainsi fine mon conte. Amen." \*

In a passage of these compilations the Emperor Charlemagne is asked whether in his judgment King Meliadus or his son Tristan were the better man? The Emperor's answer is: "I should say that the King Meliadus was the better man, and I will tell you why I say so. As far as I can see, everything that Tristan did was done for Love, and his great feats would never have been done but under the constraint of Love which was his spur and goad. Now that never can be said of King Meliadus! For what deeds he did, he did them not by dint of Love, but by dint of his strong right arm. Purely out

"Aussi Lucès de Jau (Gast?) translatà en langue Françoisse une partie de l'Hystoire de Monseigneur Tristan, et moins assez qu'il ne deust. Moul't'commença bien son livre et si ny mist tout les faicts de Tristan, ains la greigneur partie. Après s'en entremist Messire Gasse le Blond, qui estoit parent au Roy Henry, et divisa l'Hystoire de Lancelot du Lac, et d'autre chose ne parla il mye grandement en son livre. Messire Robert de Borron s'en entremist et Helye de Borron, par la prière du dit Robert de Borron, et pource que compaignons seulesmes d'armes longuement, je commencay mon livre," &c. (*Liebrecht's Dunlop*, p. 80.) If this passage be authentic it would set beyond doubt the age of the de Borrons and the other writers of Anglo-French Round Table Romances, who are placed by the *Hist. Littéraire de la France*, and apparently by Fr. Michel, under Henry II. I have no means of pursuing the matter, and have preferred to follow M. Paulin-Paris, who places them under Henry III: I notice moreover that the *Hist. Litt.* (xv. p. 498) puts not only the de Borrons but Rustician himself under Henry II.; and, as the last view is certainly an error, the first is probably so too.

\* Transc. from MS. 6975 (Fr. 355) of Paris Library.

of his own goodness he did good, and not by constraint of Love." "It will be seen," remarks on this M. Paulin-Paris, "that we are here a long way removed from the ordinary principles of Round-Table Romances. And one thing besides will be manifest, viz., that Rusticien de Pise was no Frenchman!" \*

The same discretion is shown even more prominently in a passage of one of his compilations, which contains the romances of Arthur, Gyron, and Meliadus (No. 6975—see last note but one):—

"No doubt," Rustician says, "other books tell the story of the Queen Ginevra and Lancelot differently from this; and there were certain passages between them of which the Master, in his concern for the honour of both those personages, will say not a word." Alas, says the French Bibliographer, that the copy of Lancelot, which fell into the hands of poor Francesca of Rimini, was not one of those expurgated by our worthy friend Rustician! †

41. A question may still occur to an attentive reader as to the identity of this Romance compiler Rusticien de Pise with the Messire *Rusticiens de Pise*, of a solitary MS. of Polo's work (though the oldest and most authentic), a name which appears in other copies as *Rusta Pisar*, *Rasta Pysan*, *Rustichelus Civis Pisanus*, *Rustico*, *Restazio da Pisa*, *Stazio da Pisa*, and who is stated in the preamble to have acted as the Traveller's scribe at Genoa.

Identity of the Romance Compiler with Polo's fellow-prisoner.

M. Pauthier indeed ‡ asserts that the French of the MS. Romances of Rusticien de Pise is of the same barbarous character as that of the early French MS. of Polo's Book to which we have just alluded, and which we shall show to be the nearest presentation of the work as originally dictated by the Traveller. The language of the latter MS. is so peculiar that this would be almost perfect evidence of the identity of the writers, if it were really the fact. A cursory inspection which I have made of two of those MSS. in Paris, and the extracts which I have given and am about to give, do not, however, by any means support M. Pauthier's view. Nor

MSS. *François*, iii. 60-61.

• † *Ibid.* 56-59.

‡ *Introd.* pp. lxxvi-vii, note.

would that view be consistent with the judgment of so competent an authority as M. Paulin-Paris, implied in his calling Rustician a *nom recommandable* in old French literature, and his speaking of him as "versed in the secrets of the French Romance Tongue." \* In fact the difference of language in the two cases would really be a difficulty in the way of identification, if there were room for doubt. This, however, M. Paulin-Paris seems to have excluded finally, by calling attention to the peculiar formula of preamble which is common to the Book of Marco Polo and to one of the Romance compilations of Rusticien de Pise.

The former will be found in English at pp. 1, 2, of our Translation ; but we give a part of the original below † for comparison with the preamble to the Romances of Meliadus, Tristan, and Lancelot, as taken from MS. 6961 (Fr. 340) of the Paris Library :—

*"Seigneurs Empereurs et Princes, Ducs et Contes et Barons et Chevaliers et Vassaleurs et Bourgeois, et tous les preudhommes de cestui monde qui avez talent de vous delivrer en rommans, si prenez cestui (livre) et le faites lire de chief en chief, si orrez toutes les grans aventure qui advindrent entre les Chevaliers errans du temps au Roy Uter Pendragon, jusques à le temps au Roy Artus son fils, et des compaignons de la Table Ronde. Et sachiez tout vraiment que cist livres fust translatez du livre Monseigneur Edouart le Roy d'Engleterre en cellui temps qu'il passa oultre la mer au service nostre Seigneur Damedieu pour conquerer le Sant Sepulcre, et Maistre Rusticiens de Pise, lequel est ymaginez yci dessus, ‡ compila ce rommant, car il en translata toutes les merveilleuses nouvelles et aventures qu'il trouva en celle livre et traita tout certainement de toutes les aventures du monde, et si sachiez qu'il traitera plus de Monseigneur Lancelot du Lac, et Mons<sup>r</sup> Tristan le fils au Roy Meliadus de Leonnoie que d'autres, porcequ'ilz furent sans faille les meilleurs chevaliers qui à ce temps furent en terre ; et li Maistres en dira de ces deux plusieurs choses et plusieurs nouvelles que l'en trouvera escript en tous les autres livres ; et porce que le Maistres les trouva escript au Livre d'Engleterre."*

"Certainly," M. Paulin-Paris observes, "there is a singular analogy between these two prefaces. And it must be re-

\* See *Jour. As. Ser. II. tom. xii. p. 251.*

† "*Seignors Enperœor et Rois, Dux et Marquois, Cneus, Chevaliers et Borgions [for Borgiois] et toutes gens qe voles savoir les diverses jeneracions des homes, et les deversités des deverses region dou monde, si prennés cestui livre et le faites lire et chi troverés toutes les grandismes merveillés," &c.*

‡ The portrait of Rustician here referred to would have been a precious illustration for our book. But unfortunately it has not been transferred to MS. 6961, nor apparently to any other noticed by M. Paulin-Paris.

marked that the formula is not an ordinary one with translators, compilers, or authors of the 13th and 14th centuries. Perhaps you would not find a single other example of it." \*

This seems to place beyond question the identity of the Romance compiler of Prince Edward's suite in 1270, and the Prisoner of Genoa in 1298.

42. In Dunlop's History of Fiction a passage is quoted from the preamble of *Meliadus*, as set forth in the Paris printed edition of 1528, which gives us to understand that Rusticien de Pise had received as a reward for some of his compositions from King Henry III. the prodigal gift of two *chateaux*. I gather, however, from passages in the work of M. Paulin-Paris that this must certainly be one of those confusions of persons to which I have referred before, and that the recipient of the chateaux was in reality Helye de Borron, the author of some of the originals which Rustician manipulated.† This supposed incident in Rustician's scanty history must therefore be given up.

Further particulars concerning Rustician.

We call this worthy *Rustician*, or *Rusticiano*, as the nearest probable representation in Italian form of the *Rusticien* of the Round-Table MSS. and the *Rusticians* of the old text of Polo. But it is highly probable that his real name was *Rustichello*, as is suggested by the form *Rustichelus* in the early Latin version, published by the *Société de Géographie*. The change of one liquid for another never goes for much in Italy,‡ and *Rustichello* might easily Gallicize himself as *Rusticien*. In a very long list of Pisan officials during the Middle Ages I find several bearing the name of *Rustichello* or *Rustichelli*, but no *Rusticiano* or *Rustigiano*.§

Respecting him we have only to add that the peace between Genoa and Venice was speedily followed by a treaty between Genoa and Pisa. On the 31st July, 1299, a truce for twenty-five years was signed between those two Republics. It was a very different matter from that between Genoa and Venice, and contained much that was humiliating and detri-

\* 7. *As*, as above.

† See *Liebrecht's Dunlop*, p. 77; and *MSS. François*, &c. II. 349, 353. The alleged gift to Rustician is also put forth by D'Israeli the Elder in his *Amenities of Literature*, 1841, I. p. 103.

‡ *E. g.* *Geronimo*, *Girolamo*; and *garofalo*, *garofano*; *Cristoforo*, *Cristovalo*; *gonfalone*, *gonfanone*, &c.

§ See the List in *Archivio Stor. Ital.* VI. pp. 64, *seqq.*

mental to Pisa. But it embraced the release of prisoners; and those of Meloria, reduced it is said to less than one tithe of their original number, had their liberty at last. Among the prisoners then released no doubt Rustician was one. But we hear of him no more.

VIII. NOTICES OF MARCO POLO'S HISTORY, AFTER THE TERMINATION OF HIS IMPRISONMENT AT GENOA.

43. A very few disconnected notices are all that can be collected of matter properly biographical in relation to the quarter century during which Marco Polo survived the Genoese captivity.

Death of  
Marco's  
Father  
before 1300.  
Will of his  
brother  
Maffeo.

We have seen that he would probably reach Venice in the course of August, 1299. Whether he found his aged father alive is not known; but we know at least that a year later (31st August, 1300) Messer Nicolo was no longer in life.

This we learn from the Will of the younger Maffeo, Marco's brother, which bears the date just named, and of which we give an abstract below.\* It seems to imply strong regard for

\* 1. The will is made in prospect of his voyage to Crete.

2. He had drafted his will with his own hand, sealed the draft, and made it over to Pietro Pagano, priest of St. Felice and Notary, to draw out a formal testament in faithful accordance therewith in case of the Testator's death; and that which follows is the substance of the said draft rendered from the vernacular into Latin. ("Ego Matheus Paulo . . . volens ire in Cretam, ne repentinus casus hujus vite fragilis me subreperet intestatum, mea propria manu meum scripsi et condidi testamentum, rogans Petrum Paganum ecclesie Scti. Felicis presbiterum et Notarium, sana mente et integro consilio, ut, secundum ipsius scripturam quam sibi tunc dedi meo sigillo munitam, meum scriberet testamentum, si me de hoc seculo contingeret pertransire; cujus scripture tenor translato vulgari in latinum per omnia talis est.")

3. Appoints as Trustees Messer Maffeo Polo his uncle, Marco Polo his brother, Messer Nicolo Secreto (or Sagredo) his father-in-law, and Felix Polo his cousin (*consanguineum*).

4. Leaves 20 *soldi* to each of the Monasteries from Grado to Capo d'Argine; and 150 *lire* to all the congregations of Rialto, on condition that the priests of these maintain an annual service in behalf of the souls of his father, mother, and self.

5. To his daughter Fiordelisa 2000 *lire* to marry her withal. To be invested in safe mortgages in Venice, and the interest to go to her.

Also leaves her the interest from 1000 *lire* of his investments to provide for her till she marries. After her marriage this 1000 *lire* and its interest shall go to his male heir if he has one, and failing that to his brother Marco.

the testator's brother Marco, who is made inheritor of the bulk of the property, failing the possible birth of a son. I have already indicated some conjectural deductions from this document. I may add that the terms of the second clause, as quoted in the note, seem to me to throw considerable doubt on the genealogy which bestows a large family of sons upon this brother Maffeo. If he lived to have such a family it seems improbable that the draught which he thus left in the hands of a notary, to be converted into a Will in the event of

6. To his wife Catharine 400 *lire* and all her clothes as they stand now. To the Lady Maroca 100 *lire*.

7. To his natural daughter Pasqua 400 *lire* to marry her withal. Or, if she likes to be a nun, 200 *lire* shall go to her convent and the other 200 shall purchase securities for her benefit. After her death these shall come to his male heir, or failing that be sold, and the proceeds distributed for the good of the souls of his father, mother, and self.

8. To his natural brothers Stephen and Giovannino he leaves 500 *lire*. If one dies the whole to go to the other. If both die before marrying, to go to his male heir; failing such to his brother Marco or his male heir.

9. To his uncle Giordano Trevisano 200 *lire*. To Marco Tumba 100. To Fiordelisa, wife of Felix Polo, 100. To Maroca, the daughter of the late Pietro Trevisano, living at Negropont, 100.

10. To buy securities producing an annual 20 *lire* *di grossa* to be paid yearly to Pietro Pagano, Priest of S. Felice, who shall pray for the souls aforesaid; on death of said Pietro the income to go to Pietro's cousin Leonardo, Clerk of St. Felice; and after him always to the senior priest of S. Giovanni Grisostomo with the same obligation.

11. Should his wife prove with child and bear a son or sons they shall have his whole property not disposed of. If a daughter, she shall have the same as Fiordelisa.

12. If he have no male heir his Brother Marco shall have the Testator's share of his Father's bequest, and 2000 *lire* besides. Cousin Nicolo shall have 500 *lire*, and Uncle Maffeo 500.

13. Should Daughter Fiordelisa die unmarried her 2000 *lire* and interest to go to his male heir, and failing such to Brother Marco and his male heir. But in that case Marco shall pay 500 *lire* to Cousin Nicolo or his male heir.

14. Should his wife bear him a male heir or heirs, but these should die under age, the whole of his undisposed property shall go to Brother Marco or his male heir. But in that case 500 *lire* shall be paid to Cousin Nicolo.

15. Should his wife bear a daughter and she die unmarried, her 2000 *lire* and interest shall go to Brother Marco, with the same stipulation in behalf of Cousin Nicolo.

16. Should the whole amount of his property between cash and goods not amount to 10,000 *lire* (though he believes he has fully as much), his bequests are to be ratably diminished, except those to his own children which he does not wish diminished.

17. Should any legatee die before receiving the bequest, its amount shall fall to the Testator's heir male, and failing such, the half to go to Brother Marco or his male heir, and the other half to be distributed for the good of the souls aforesaid.

The witnesses are Leonardo priest of S. Felice, Leonardo clerk of the same, and the Notary Pietro Pagano priest of the same.

his death (a curious example of the validity attaching to all acts of notaries in those days), should never have been superseded, but should actually have been so converted after his death, as the existence of the parchment seems to prove.

Messer Maffeo, the uncle, was, we see, alive at this time. We do not know the year of his death. But it is alluded to by Friar Pipino in the Preamble to his Translation of the Book, supposed to have been executed about 1315-1320.

44 In 1302 occurs what was at first supposed to be a glimpse of Marco as a citizen, slight and quaint enough; being a resolution on the Books of the Great Council to exempt the respectable Marco Polo from the penalty incurred by him on account of the omission to have his water-pipe duly inspected. But since our Marco's claims to the designation of *Nobilis Vir* have been established, there is a doubt whether the *providus vir* or *prud'homme* here spoken of may not have been rather his namesake Marco Polo of Cannareggio or S. Geremia, of whose existence we learn from another entry of the same year.\* It is however possible that Marco the Traveller was called to the Great Council *after* the date of the document in question.

We have seen that the Traveller, and after him his House and his Book, acquired from his contemporaries the surname, or nick-name rather, of *Il Milione*. Different writers have given different explanations of the origin of this name; some, beginning with his contemporary Fra Jacopo d'Acqui (*supra*, p. lxxxii), ascribing it to the family's having brought home a fortune of a million of *lire*, in fact to their being *millionaires*. This is the explanation followed by Sansovino, Marco Barbaro, Coronelli, and others.† More far-fetched is that of Fontanini who supposes the name to have been given to the

\* "(Resolved) That grace be granted to the respectable MARCO PAULO, relieving him of the penalty he has incurred for neglecting to have his water-pipe examined, seeing that he was ignorant of the order on that subject." (See the original resolution in *Appendix C*, No. 3.)

The other reference; to M. Polo of S. Geremia, runs as follows:—

"That grace be granted to William the Goldsmith relieving him of the penalty which he is stated to have incurred on account of a spontoon (*spontono*, a loaded bludgeon) found upon him near the house of MARCO PAULO of Cannareggio, where he had landed to drink on his way from Mestre." (See *Cicogna*, V. p. 606.)

† Sansovino, *Venezia, Città Nobilissima e Singolare, Descritta*, &c., Ven. 1581, f. 236 v.; Barbaro, *Alberi*; Coronelli, *Atlante Veneto*, 19.

Book as containing a great number of stories, like the *Cento Novelle* or the *Thousand and One Nights* ! But there can be no doubt that Ramusio's is the true, as it is the natural, explanation ; and that the name was bestowed on Marco by the young wits of his native city, because of his frequent use of a word which appears to have been then unusual, in his attempts to convey an idea of the vast wealth and magnificence of the Kaan's Treasury and Court.\* Ramusio has told us (*supra*, p. xxxvii) that he had seen Marco styled by this sobriquet in the Books of the Signory ; and it is pleasant to be able to confirm this by the next document which we cite. This is an extract from the Books of the Great Council under 10th April, 1305, condoning the offence of a certain Bonocio of Mestre in smuggling wine, for whose penalty one of the sureties had been the NOBILIS VIR MARCHUS PAULO MILIONI.†

It is alleged that long after our Traveller's death there was always, in the Venetian Masques, one individual who assumed the character of Marco Milioni, and told Munchausenlike stories to divert the vulgar. Such, if this be true, was the honour of our prophet among the populace of his own country.‡

45. A little later we hear of Marco once more, as presenting a copy of his Book to a noble Frenchman in the service of Charles of Valois.

\* The word *Mille* occurs several times in the Chronicle of the Doge Andrea Dandolo, who wrote about 1342 ; and *Milion* occurs at least once (besides the application of the term to Polo) in the History of Giovanni Villani ; viz. when he speaks of the Treasury of Avignon : “ *dato milion di fiorini d' oro ec. che ogni bone è mille mughaja di fiorini d' oro la valuta* ” (xi. 20, § 1 : *Quango*, and *Vocab. Univ. Ital.*). But the definition, thought necessary by Villani, in itself points to the use of the word as rate. *Demilion* occurs in the estimated value of houses at Venice in 1367, recorded in the *Cronaca Magna* in St. Mark's Library (*Romanin*, III. 385).

† “ Also ; that pardon be granted to Bonocio of Mestre for that 152 *lire* in which he stood condemned by the Captains of the Posts, on account of wine smuggled by him, in such wise : to wit, that he was to pay the said fine in 4 years by annual instalments of one fourth, to be retrenched from the pay due to him on his journey in the suite of our ambassadors, with assurance that anything then remaining deficient of his instalments should be made good by himself or his securities. And his securities are the Nobles Pietro Morosini and MARCO PAULO MILIONI.” Under *Milioni* is written, in an ancient hand “ *mortuus*.” (See *Appendix C*, No. 4.)

‡ Humboldt tells this (*Examen*, II. 221), alleging *Jacopo d'Acqui* as authority ; and Libri (*II. des Sciences Mathématiques*, II. 149), quoting *Doglion*, *Historia Veneziana*. But neither authority bears out the citations. The story seems really to come from Amoretti's commentary on the *Voyage du Cap. L. F. Maldonado*, Plaisance, 1812, p. 67. Amoretti quotes as authority *Pignoria*, *Degli Dei Antichi*.



This Prince, brother of Philip the Fair, in 1301 had married Catharine, daughter and heiress of Philip de Courtenay, titular Emperor of Constantinople, and on the strength of this marriage had at a later date set up his own claim to the Empire of the East. To this he was prompted by Pope Clement V., who in the beginning of 1306 wrote to Venice, stimulating that Government to take part in the enterprise. In the same year, Charles and his wife sent as their Envoys to Venice, in connexion with this matter, a noble knight called THIBAUT DE CEPOY, along with an ecclesiastic of Chartres called Pierre le Riche, and these two succeeded in executing a treaty of alliance with Venice, of which the original, dated 14th December 1306, exists at Paris. Thibault de Cepoy eventually went on to Greece with a squadron of Venetian Galleys, but accomplished nothing of moment, and returned to his master in 1310.\*

During the stay of Thibault at Venice he seems to have made acquaintance with Marco Polo, and to have received from him a copy of his Book. This is recorded in a curious note which appears on two existing MSS. of Polo's Book, viz., that of the Paris Library (10,270 or Fr. 5649), and that of Bern, which is substantially identical in its text with the former, and is, as I believe, a copy of it.† The note runs as follows:—

“Here you have the Book of which My Lord THIEBAULT, Knight and LORD OF CEPOY (whom may God assoil!) requested a copy from SIRE MARC POL Burgess and Resident of the City of Venice. And the said Sire Marc Pol, being a very honourable Person, of high character and respect in many countries, because of his desire that what he had witnessed should be known throughout the World, and also for the honour and reverence he bore to the most excellent and puissant Prince my Lord CHARLES, Son of the King of France and COUNT OF VALOIS, gave and presented to the aforesaid Lord of Cepoy the first copy (that was taken) of his said Book after he had made the same. And very pleasing it was to him that his Book should be carried to the noble country of France and there made known by so worthy a gentleman. And from that copy

\* Thibault, according to Ducange, was in 1307 named Grand Master of the Arblasteers of France; and Buchon says his portrait is at Versailles among the Admirals (No. 1170). Ramon de Muntaner fell in with the Seigneur de Cepoy in Greece, and speaks of him as “but a Captain of the Wind, as his Master was King of the Wind” (See *Ducange, H. de l'Empire de Const. sous les Emp. Français*, Venice ed. 1729, pp. 109, 110; *Buchon, Chroniques Etrangères*, pp. lv, 467-470).

† The note is not found in the Bodleian MS. which is the third known one of this precise type.

which the said Messire Thibault, Sire de Cepoy above-named, did carry into France, Messire John, who was his eldest son and is the present Sire de Cepoy,\* after his Father's decease did have a copy made, and that very first copy that was made of the Book after its being carried into France he did present to his very dear and dread Lord Monseigneur de Valois. Thereafter he gave copies of it to such of his friends as asked for them.

"And the copy above-mentioned was presented by the said Sire Marc Pol to the said Lord de Cepoy when the latter went to Venice, on the part of Monseigneur de Valois and of Madame the Empress his wife, as Vicar General for them both in all the Territories of the Empire of Constantinople. And this happened in the year of the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ one thousand three hundred and seven, and in the month of August."

Of the bearings of this memorandum on the literary history of Polo's Book we shall speak in a following section.

46. When Marco married we have not been able to ascertain, but it was no doubt early in the 14th century, for in 1324 we find that he had two married daughters besides one unmarried. His wife's Christian name was *Dornata*, but of her family we have as yet found no assurance. I suspect, however, that her name may have been Loredano (*vide infra*, p. cv).

His marriage and his daughters. Marco as a merchant.

Under 1311 we find a document which is of considerable interest, because it is the only one yet discovered which exhibits Marco under the aspect of a practical trader. It is the judgment of the Court of Requests upon a suit brought by the NOBLE MARCO POLO of the parish of S. Giovanni Grisostomo against one Paulo Girardo of S. Apollinare. It appears that Marco had entrusted to the latter as a commission agent for sale, on an agreement for half profits, a pound and a half of musk, priced at six *lire of grossi* (about 22*l.* 10*s.* in value of silver). Gerardo had sold half a pound at that rate, and the remaining pound which he brought back was deficient of a *saggio*, or one-sixth of an ounce, but he had accounted for neither the sale nor the deficiency. Hence Marco sues him for three *lire of Grossi*, the price of the half-pound sold, and for twenty *grossi* as the value of the *saggio*. And the Judges cast the defendant in the amount with costs, and the penalty of im-

\* Messire Jean, the son of Thibault, is mentioned in the accounts of the latter in the *Chambre des Comptes* at Paris, as having been with his Father in Romania. And in 1344 he commanded a confederate Christian armament sent to check the rising power of the Turks, and beat a great Turkish fleet in the Greek seas (*Hoyd.* I. 377; *Buchon*, 468).

prisonment in the common gaol of Venice if the amounts were not paid within a suitable term.\*

Again in May, 1323, probably within a year of his death, Ser Marco appears (perhaps only by attorney), before the Doge and his judicial examiners, to obtain a decision respecting a question touching the rights to certain stairs and porticoes in contact with his own house property, and that obtained from his wife, in S. Giovanni Grisostomo. To this allusion has been already made (*supra*, p. lix).

47. We catch sight of our Traveller only once more. It is on the 9th of January, 1324; he is labouring with disease, under which he is sinking day by day; and he has sent for Giovanni Giustiniani, Priest of S. Proculo and Notary, to make his Last Will and Testament. It runs thus:—

Marco  
Polo's Last  
Will, and  
Death.

“ IN THE NAME OF THE ETERNAL GOD AMEN !

“ In the year from the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ 1323, on the 9th day of the month of January, in the first half of the 7th Indiction,† at Rialto.

“ It is the counsel of Divine Inspiration as well as the judgment of a provident mind that every man should take thought to make a disposition of his property before death become imminent, lest in the end it should remain without any disposition :

“ Wherefore I MARCUS PAULO of the parish of St. John Chrysostom, finding myself to grow daily feebler through bodily ailment, but being by the grace of God of a sound mind, and of senses and judgment unimpaired, have sent for JOHN GIUSTINIANI, Priest of S. Proculo and Notary, and have instructed him to draw out in complete form this my Testament :

“ Whereby I constitute as my Trustees DONATA my beloved wife, and my dear daughters FANTINA, BELLELA, and MORETA,‡ in order that after my decease they may execute the dispositions and bequests which I am about to make herein.

\* The document is given in Appendix C, No. 5. It was found by Signor Barozzi, the Director of the Museo Civico, when he had most kindly accompanied me to aid in the search for certain other documents in the archives of the *Casa di Ricovero*, or Poor House of Venice. These archives contain a great mass of testamentary and other documents, which probably have come into that singular depository in connexion with bequests to public charities.

The document next mentioned was found in as strange a site, viz., the *Casa degli Esposti* or Foundling Hospital, which possesses similar muniments. This also I owe to Signor Barozzi, who had noted it some years before, when commencing an arrangement of the archives of the Institution.

† The Legal Year at Venice began on the 1st of March. And 1324 was 7th of the Indiction. Hence the date is, according to the modern Calendar, 1324.

‡ Marsden says of Moretta and Fantina, the only daughters named by Ramusio, that these may be thought rather familiar terms of endearment than baptismal

"First of all: I will and direct that the proper Tithe be paid.\* And over and above the said tithe I direct that 2000 *lire* of Venice denari be distributed as follows:†

"viz., 20 *soldi* of Venice *grossi* to the Monastery of St. Lawrence where I desire to be buried.

"Also 300 *lire* of Venice denari to my sister-in-law YSABETA QUIRINO, that she owes me.

"Also 40 *soldi* to each of the Monasteries and Hospitals all the way from Grado to Capo d'Argine.‡

"Also I bequeath to the Convent of SS. Giovanni and Paolo, of the Order of Preachers, that which it owes me, and also 10 *lire* to Friar RENIER, and 5 *lire* to Friar BENVENUTO the Venetian, of the Order of Preachers, in addition to the amount of his debt to me.

"I also bequeath 5 *lire* to every Congregation in Rialto, and 4 *lire* to every Guild or Fraternity of which I am a member §

"§ Also I bequeath 20 *soldi* of Venetian *grossi* to the Priest Giovanni Giustiniani the Notary, for his trouble about this my Will, and in order that he may pray the Lord in my behalf.

names. This is a mistake however. *Fantua* is from one of the parochial saints of Venice, S. Fantino, and the male name was borne by sundry Venetians, among others by a son of Henry Dandolo's. *Moreta* is perhaps a variation of *Maroca*, which seems to have been a family name among the Polos. We find also the male name of Bellela, written *Bellela*, *Bellero*, *Bellero*.

\* The *Ducato* went to the Bishop of Castello (eventually converted into Patriarch of Venice) to divide between himself, the Clergy, the Church, and the Poor. It became a source of much bad feeling, which came to a head after the plague of 1348, when some families had to pay the tenth three times within a very short space. The existing bishop agreed to a composition, but his successor Paolo Foscarini (1367) claimed that on the death of every citizen an exact inventory should be made, and a full tithe levied. The Signory fought hard with the Bishop, but he fled to the Papal Court and refused all concession. After his death in 1376 a composition was made for 5500 ducats yearly (*Romanin*, II. 406: III. 161, 165).

† There is a difficulty about estimating the value of the sums from the variety of Venice pounds or *lire*. Thus the *Lira dei picoli* was reckoned 3 to the ducat or zecchin, the *Lira ai grossi* 2 to the ducat, but the *Lira dei grossi* or *Lira d'imprestadi* was equal to 10 ducats, or (allowing for higher value of silver then) about 3*l.* 15*s.*; a little more than the equivalent of the then Pound sterling. This last money is specified in some of the bequests, as in the 20 *soldi* (or 1 *lira*) to St. Lorenzo, and in the annuity of 8 *lire* to Polo's wife; but it seems doubtful what money is meant when *libra* only or *libra denariorum centorum* is used. And this doubt is not new. Gallicciolli relates that in 1232 Giacomo Menotto left to the church of S. Cassiano as an annuity *libras denariorum centorum quatuor*. Till 1427 the church received the income as of *lire dei picoli*, but on bringing a suit on the subject it was adjudged that *lire ai grossi* were to be understood (*Delle Mem. Venet. Ant.* II. 18). This story however cuts both ways, and does not decide our doubt.

‡ I.e., the extent of what was properly called the Dogado, all along the Lagoons from Grado on the extreme east to Capo d'Argine (Cavarzere at the mouth of the Adige) on the extreme west.

§ The word rendered *Guilds* is "*Scholarum*." The crafts at Venice were united in corporations called *Fraglie* or *Scholæ*, each of which had its statutes, its head called the *Gastald*, and its place of meeting under the patronage of some saint. These acted as societies of mutual aid, gave dowries to poor girls, caused masses to be celebrated for deceased members, joined in public religious processions, &c., nor could any craft be exercised except by members of such a guild (*Romanin*, I. 390).

"Also I release PETER the Tartar, my servant, from all bondage, as completely as I pray God to release mine own soul, from all sin and guilt. And I also remit him whatever he may have gained by work at his own house; and over and above I bequeath him 100 *lire* of Venice denari.\*"

"And the residue of the said 2000 *lire*, free of tithe, I direct to be distributed for the good of my soul, according to the discretion of my trustees.

"Out of my remaining property I bequeath to the aforesaid Donata, my Wife and Trustee, 8 *lire* of Venetian grossi annually during her life, for her own use, over and above her settlement, and the linen and all the household utensils,† with 3 beds garnished.

"And all my other property movable and immovable that has not been disposed of [here follow some lines of more technicality] I specially and expressly bequeath to my aforesaid Daughters Fantina, Bellela, and Moreta, freely and absolutely, to be divided equally among them. And I constitute them my heirs as regards all and sundry my property movable and immovable, and as regards all rights and contingencies tacit and expressed, of whatsoever kind as hereinbefore detailed, that belong to me or may fall to me. Save and except that before division my said daughter Moreta shall receive the same as each of my other daughters hath received for dowry and outfit [here follow many lines of technicalities, ending]

"And if any one shall presume to infringe or violate this Will, may he incur the malediction of God Almighty, and abide bound under the anathema of the 318 Fathers; and farthermore he shall forfeit to my

\* It is not unnatural to suppose, as M. Pauthier does, that this Peter the Tartar was a faithful servant who had accompanied Messer Marco from the East 30 years before; but this is probably quite a mistake. Slavery and slave-trade were very prevalent at Venice in the Middle Ages, and V. Lazari, a writer who examined a great many records connected therewith, found that by far the greater number of slaves were described as *Tartars*. There does not seem to be any clear information as to how they were imported, but probably from the factories on the Black Sea, especially Tana after its establishment.

A tax of 5 ducats per head was set on the export of slaves in 1379, and as the revenue so received under the Doge Tommaso Mocenigo (1414-1423) amounted (so says Lazari) to 50,000 ducats, the startling conclusion is that 10,000 slaves yearly were exported! This it is difficult to accept. The slaves were chiefly employed in domestic service, and the records indicate the women to have been about twice as numerous as the men. The highest price recorded is 87 ducats paid for a Russian girl sold in 1429. All the higher prices are for young women; a significant circumstance. With the existence of this system we may safely connect the extraordinary frequency of mention of illegitimate children in Venetian wills and genealogies (see Lazari, *Del Traffico degli Schiavi in Venezia*, &c., in *Miscellanea di Storia Italiana*, I. 463 *seqq.*). In 1308 the Khan Toktai of Kipchak (see Polo, II. 426) hearing that the Genoese and other Franks were in the habit of carrying off Tartar children to sell, sent a force against Caffa, which was occupied without resistance, the people taking refuge in their ships. The Khan also seized the Genoese property in Sarai (*Heyd*. II. 27).

† "*Stracium et omne capud massariciorum*;" in Scotch phrase "*napery and plenishing*." A Venetian statute of 1242 prescribes that a bequest of *massaricum* shall be held to carry to the legatee all articles of common family use except those of gold and silver plate or jeweller's work (see *Ducange*, *sub voce*). *Stracci* is still used technically in Venice for "household linen."

Trusted, aforesaid five pounds of gold ;\* and so let this my Testament abide in force. The signature of the above named Messer Marco Paulo who gave instructions for this deed.

“† † Peter Grifon, Priest, Witness.

“† † Humphrey Barberi, Witness.

“\* † I John Giustiniani, Priest of S. Proculo, and Notary, have completed and authenticated (this testament).”†

We do not know, as has been said, how long Marco survived the making of this will, but we know, from a scanty series of documents commencing in June of the following year (1325), that he had *then* been some time dead.†

48. He was buried, no doubt, according to his declared

\* In the original *aureas libras quinque*. According to Marino Sanuto the Younger (*Vite dei Dogi in Muratori*, xxii. 521) this should be pounds or *lire* of *aureole*, the name of a silver coin struck by and named after the Doge *Aurio* Mastropietro (1178-1192) : “Ancora fu fatta una Moneta d'argento che si chiamava *Aureola* per la casata del Doge ; e quella Moneta che i Notai de Venezia mettevano di pena sotto i loro instrumenti.” But this was a vulgar error. An example of the penalty of 5 pounds of gold is quoted from a decree of 960 ; and the penalty is sometimes expressed “*auri purissimi libras 5*.” A coin called the *lira d'oro* or *redonda* is alleged to have been in use before the ducat was introduced (see *Galluccioli*, II. 16). But another authority seems to identify the *lira a oro* with the *lira dei grossi* (see *Zanetti, Nuova Rassegna delle Monete Esc. d'Italia*, 1775, I. 308).

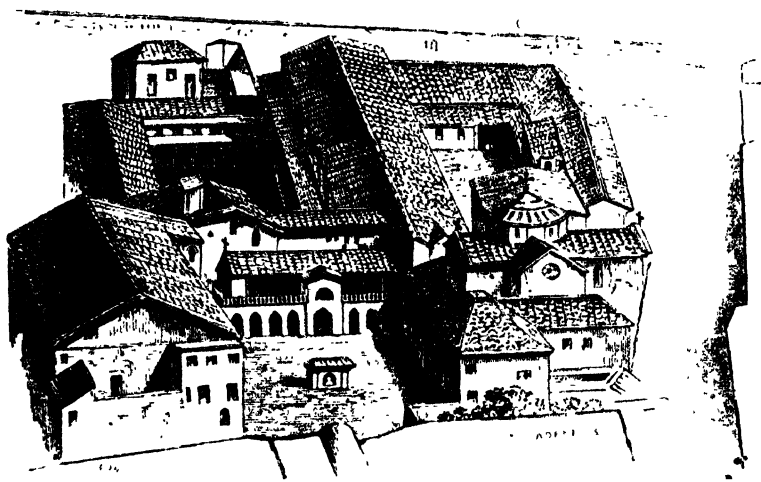
† We give opposite a photo-lithographic reduction of the original document. This, and the other two Polo Wills already quoted, had come into the possession of the Noble Filippo Balbi, and were by him presented in our own time to the St. Mark's Library. They are all on parchment, in writing of that age, and have been officially examined and declared to be originals. They were first published by *Cicogna, Iscrizioni Veneziane*, III. 489-493. We give Marco's in the original language, line for line with the facsimile, in Appendix C. No. 8.

There is no signature, as may be seen, except those of the Witnesses and the Notary. The sole presence of a Notary was held to make a deed valid, and from about the middle of the 13th century in Italy it is common to find no actual signature (even of witnesses) except that of the Notary. The peculiar flourish before the Notary's name is what is called the *Tabellionato*, a fanciful distinctive monogram which each Notary adopted. Marco's Will is unfortunately written in a very cramp hand with many contractions. The other two Wills (of Marco the Elder and Maffeo) are in beautiful and clear penmanship.

‡ We have noticed formerly (p. xiii) the recent discovery of a document bearing what was supposed to be the autograph signature of our Traveller. The document in question is the Minute of a Resolution of the Great Council, attested by the signatures of three members, of whom the last is MARCUS PAULLO. But the date alone, 11th March, 1324, is sufficient to raise the gravest doubts as to this signature being that of our Marco. And further examination, as I learn from a friend at Venice, has shown that the same name occurs in connexion with analogous entries on several subsequent occasions up to the middle of the century. I presume that this *Marco Polo* is the same that is noticed in our Appendix B, II. as a voter in the elections of the Doges Marino Faliero and Giovanni Gradenigo. I have not been able to ascertain his relation to either branch of the Polo family ; but I suspect that he belonged to that of S. Geremia, of which there was certainly a Marco about the middle of the century.

wish, in the church of S. Lorenzo ; and indeed Sarsovino bears testimony to the fact in a confused notice of our Traveller.\* But there does not seem to have been any monument to Marco, though the sarcophagus which had been erected to his father Nicolo, by his own filial care, existed till near the end of the 16th century in the porch or corridor leading to the old church of S. Lorenzo, and bore the inscription: "SEPULTURA DOMINI

Place of  
Sepulture.  
Professed  
Portraits of  
Polo.



S. Lorenzo, as it was in the 15th century.

NICOLAI PAULO DE CONTRATA S. IOANNIS GRISOSTEMI." The church was renewed from its foundations in 1592, and then, probably, the sarcophagus was cast aside and lost, and with it all certainty as to the position of the tomb.†

There is no portrait of Marco Polo in existence with any claim to authenticity. The quaint figure which we give on the next page, extracted from the earliest printed edition of his book, can certainly make no such pretension. The oldest one

\* "Under the *angiporta* (of S. Lorenzo) is buried that Marco Polo surnamed Milione, who wrote the Travels in the New World, and who was the first before Christopher Columbus to discover new countries. No faith was put in him because of the extravagant things that he recounted ; but in the days of our Fathers Columbus augmented belief in him, by discovering that part of the world, which eminent men had heretofore judged to be uninhabited" (*Venezia . . . : L'Arte della Guerra*, &c. f. 25 v.). Marco Barbaro attests the same inscription in his *Genealogies* (copy in Museo Civico at Venice).

† *Cicogna*, II. 385.



"This is the Noble Knight Marco Polo of Venice, the Great Traveller, who describes to us the Great Wonders of the World that he himself hath seen, in the Rising to the Setting of the Sun; the like of which were never heard before."—*From the First Printed Edition, Nuremberg, 1477.*



after this is probably a picture in the collection of Monsignor Badia at Rome, which I have seen. It seems to be a work of the latter part of the 16th century or thereabouts, and represents a burly, vigorous personage, with a bushy white beard, and a red mantle, inscribed "*Marcus Polus Venetus Totius Orbis et Indie Peregrator Primus.*"\* Its history unfortunately cannot be traced, but I believe it came from a collection at Urbino. A marble statue was erected in his honour by a family at Venice in the 17th century, and is still to be seen in the Palazzo Morosini-Gattemburg in the Campo S. Stefano in that city. The medallion portrait on the wall of the *Sala dello Scudo* in the Ducal palace, and which was engraved in Bettoni's "Collection of Portraits of Illustrious Italians," is a work of imagination painted by Francesco Grisellini in 1761.† From this, however, was taken the medal by Fabris, which was struck in 1847 in honour of the last meeting of the Italian Congresso Scientifico; and from the medal again is copied, I believe, the elegant woodcut which adorns the introduction to M. Pauthier's edition, though without a hint of its history. A handsome bust, by Augusto Gamba, has lately been placed among the illustrious Venetians in the inner arcade of the Ducal Palace.‡

49. From the short series of documents recently alluded to,§ we gather all that we know of the remaining history of Marco Polo's immediate family. We have seen in his will an indication that the two elder daughters, Fantina and Bellela, were married before his death. Further History of the Polo Family. In 1333 we find the youngest, Moreta, also a married woman, and Bellela deceased. In 1336 we find that their mother Donata had died in the interval. We learn, too, that Fantina's husband was MARCO BRAGADINO, and Moreta's, RANUZZO DOLFINO.¶ The name of Bellela's husband does not appear.

\* Of this I had hoped to present an engraving, and had obtained the owner's permission, but circumstances have prevented my taking advantage of it.

† *Lazari*, xxxi.

‡ I have recently learned that, in the "Temple of the 500 Gods" at Canton, there is a figure in a foreign costume which, from the name attached, has been supposed to represent Marco Polo! I regret that there is not now time to ascertain further particulars.

§ These documents are noted in Appendix C, Nos. 9 to 12.

¶ I can find no *Ranuzzo Dolfino* among the Venetian genealogies, but several *Reniers*. And I suspect Ranuzzo may be a form of the latter name.

Fantina's husband is probably the Marco Bragadino, son of Pietro, who in 1346 is mentioned to have been sent as Provveditore-Generale to act against the Patriarch of Aquileia.\* And in 1379 we find Donna Fantina herself, presumably in widowhood, assessed as a resident of S. Giovanni Grisostomo, on the *Estimo* or forced loan for the Genoese war, at 1300 *lire*, whilst Pietro Bragadino of the same parish—her son as I imagine—is assessed at 1500 *lire*.†

It will have been seen that there is nothing in the amounts mentioned in Marco's Will to bear out the large reports as to his wealth, though at the same time there is no positive ground for a deduction to the contrary.‡

The mention in these last documents of Agnes Loredano as the sister of the Lady Donata suggests that the latter may have belonged to the Loredano family, but as it does not appear whether Agnes was maid or wife this remains uncertain.§

Respecting the further history of the family there is nothing certain to be added to Ramusio's statement that the last male descendant of the Polos of S. Giovanni Grisostomo was Marco, who died Castellano of Verona in 1417 (according to others, 1418, or 1425).|| and that the family property then passed to Maria (or *Anna*, as she is styled in a MS. statement furnished to me from Venice), who was married in 1401 to Benedetto Cornaro, and again in 1414 to Azzo Trevisan. Her descendant in the fourth generation by the latter was Marc Antonio Trevisano¶ who was chosen Doge in 1553.

\* *Capellari* as below, under *Bragadino*.

† *Ibid.* and *Gallicciolli*, II. 146.

‡ Yet, if the family were so wealthy as tradition represents, it is strange that Marco's brother Maffeo, after receiving a share of his father's property, should have possessed barely 10,000 *lire*, probably equivalent to 5000 ducats at most (see p. lxi, *supra*).

§ An Agnes Loredano, Abbess of S. Maria delle Vergini, died in 1397 (*Cicogna*, V. 91 and 629). But Donata's sister could scarcely have lived so long.

|| In the *Museo Civico* (No. 2271 of the Cicogna collection) there is a commission addressed by the Doge Michiel Stenq in 1408, "*Nobili Viro Marcho Paulo*," nominating him Podestà of Arostica (a Castello of the Vicentino). This is probably the same Marco.

¶ The descent runs: (1) Azzo = Maria Polo; (2) Febo, Captain at Padua; (3) Zaccaria, Senator; (4) Domenico, Procurator of St. Marks: (5) Marc' Antonio, Doge (*Capellari*, *Campidoglio Veneto*, MS. St. Mark's Lib.).

Marc' Antonio *noloat ducari* and after election desired to renounce. His friends persuaded him to retain office, but he lived scarcely a year after (*Cicogna*, IV. 566).

The genealogy recorded by Marco Barbafo, as drawn up from documents by Ramusio, makes the Castellano of Verona a grandson of our Marco by a son Maffeo, whom we may safely pronounce not to have existed, and makes Maria the daughter of Maffeo, Marco's brother—that is to say, makes a lady marry in 1414 and have children, whose father was born in 1271 at the very latest! The genealogy is given in several other ways, but as I have satisfied myself that they all (except perhaps this of Barbafo's, which we see to be otherwise erroneous) confound together the two distinct families of Polo of S. Geremia and Polo of S. Giov. Grisostomo, I reserve my faith, and abstain from presenting them. I have met with no positive proof that any descendant in the male line of old Andrea of San Felice survived Marco himself; and from a study of the links in the professed genealogies I think it not unlikely that both Marco the Castellano of Verona and Maria Trevisan belonged to the branch of S. Geremia.†

#### IX. MARCO POLO'S BOOK ; AND THE LANGUAGE IN WHICH IT WAS FIRST WRITTEN.

50. The Book itself consists essentially of Two Parts. *First*, of a Prologue, as it is termed, the only part which is actual personal narrative, and which relates, in a very interesting but far too brief manner, the circumstances which led the two elder Polos to the Kaan's Court, and those of their second journey with Mark, and of their return to Persia through the Indian Seas. *Secondly*, of a long series of chapters of very unequal length, descriptive of notable sights and products, of curious manners, and remarkable events relating to the different nations and states of Asia, but, above all, to the Emperor Kublai, his court, wars, and administration. A series of chapters near the close treats in a verbose and monotonous manner of sundry wars that took place between the various branches of the House of Chinghiz in the latter half of the 13th century. This last series is either

General  
statement of  
what the  
Book con-  
tains.

† In Appendix B will be found tabulated all the facts that seem to be positively as to the Polo genealogies.

omitted or greatly curtailed in all the copies and versions except one; a circumstance perfectly accounted for by the absence of interest as well as value in the bulk of these chapters. Indeed, desirous though I have been to give the Traveller's work complete, and sharing the dislike that every man who *uses* books must bear to abridgments, I have felt that it would be sheer waste and dead-weight to print these chapters in full.

This second and main portion of the Work is in its oldest forms undivided, the chapters running on consecutively to the end.\* In some very early Italian or Venetian version, which Friar Pipino translated into Latin, it was divided into three Books, and this convenient division has generally been adhered to. We have adopted M. Pauthier's suggestion in making the final series of chapters, chiefly historical, into a Fourth.

51. As regards the language in which Marco's Book was first committed to writing, we have seen that Ramusio assumed, somewhat arbitrarily, that it was *Latin*; Marsden supposed it to have been the *Venetian* dialect; Bal-  
Language  
of the  
original  
Work.  
 dello Boni first showed, in his elaborate edition (Florence, 1827), by arguments that have been illustrated and corroborated by learned men since, that it was *French*.

That the work was originally written in *some* Italian dialect was a natural presumption, and slight contemporary evidence can be alleged in its favour; for Fra Pipino, in the Latin version of the work, executed whilst Marco still lived, describes his task as a translation *de vulgari*. And in one MS. copy of the same Friar Pipino's Chronicle, existing in the library at Modena, he refers to the said version as made "*ex vulgari idiomate Lombardico*." But though it may seem improbable that at so early a date a Latin version should have been made at second hand, I believe this to have been the case, and that some internal evidence also is traceable that Pipino translated *not* from the original but from an Italian *version* of the original.

The oldest MS. (it is supposed) in any Italian dialect is one in the Magliabecchian Library at Florence, which is known

\* 232 chapters in the oldest French which we quote as the *Geographic Text* (or G. T.), 200 in Pauthier's Text, 183 in the Crusca Italian.

in Italy as *L'Ottima*, on account of the purity of its Tuscan, and as *Della Crusca* from its being one of the authorities cited by that body in their Vocabulary.\* It bears on its face the following note in Italian :—

“ This Book called the Navigation of Messer Marco Polo, a noble Citizen of Venice, was written in Florence by Michael Ormanni my great grandfather by the Mother's side, who died in the Year of Grace One Thousand Three Hundred and Nine ; and my mother brought it into our Family of Del Riccio, and it belongs to me Pier del Riccio and to my Brother ; 1452.”

As far as I can learn, the age which this note implies is considered to be supported by the character of the MS. itself.† If it be accepted, the latter is a performance going back to within eleven years *at most* of the first dictation of the Travels. At first sight, therefore, this would rather argue that the original had been written in pure Tuscan. But when Baldello came to prepare it for the press he found manifest indications of its being a Translation from the *French*. Some of these he has noted ; others have followed up the same line of comparison. We give some detailed examples in a note.‡

\* The MS. has been printed by Baldello as above, and again by Bartoli in 1863.

† This is somewhat peculiar. I have traced a few lines of it, which with Del Riccio's note I give in facsimile opposite. The passage of the MS. represented is the following :—

“ Di Baudac come fu presa. Baudac e una grande cittade ouè lo Chaliffo di tutti gli Saracini del mondo chosi chomè a Roma il Papa di tutti gli Cristiani. Per messo la città passa un fiume molto grande perloquale si puote andare in sino nel mare d'India”





52. The French Text that we have been quoting, published by the Geographical Society of Paris in 1824, affords on the other hand the strongest corresponding proof that it is an original and not a Translation. Rude as is the language of the manuscript (Fr. 1116, formerly No. 7367, of Paris Library), it is in the correctness of the proper names, and the intelligible exhibition of the itineraries, much superior to any form of the Work previously published.

Old French  
Text published  
by the Société  
de Géographie.

The language is very peculiar. We are obliged to call it French, "but it is not "Frenche of Paris." "Its style," says M. Paulin-Paris, "is about as like that of good French authors of the age, as in our day the natural accent of a German, an Englishman, or an Italian, is like that of a citizen of Paris or Blois." The author is at war with all the practices of French grammar; subject and object, numbers, moods, and tenses, are in consummate confusion. Even readers of his own day must at times have been fain to guess his meaning. Italian words are constantly introduced, either quite in the crude or rudely Gallicized.\* And words also, we may add, sometimes slip in which appear to be purely Oriental, just as is apt to happen with Anglo-Indians in these days.† All this is perfectly con-

"*Chioytain et aide*." This has fairly puzzled the Tuscan who converts these (p. 186) into two Tartar tribes, "*quegli d'Aide e quegli di Caveità*."

So also we have *lierre* for hare transferred without change; *lait*, milk, appearing as *laido* instead of *latte*; *très*, rendered as "three;" *buc*, "mud," Italianized as *buoi*, "oxen," and so forth. Finally, in various places when Polo is explaining oriental terms we find in the Tuscan MS. "*ciò a dire in Francesco*."

The blunders mentioned are intelligible enough as in a version from the French; but in the account of the Indian Pearl fishery we have a startling one not so easy to account for. The French says, "the divers gather the sea-oysters (*hostrige de Mer*), and in these the pearls are found." This appears in the Tuscan in the extraordinary form that the divers catch those fishes called *Herrings* (*Aringhe*), and in those Herrings are found the Pearls!

\* As examples of these Italianisms: "*Et ont del olio de la lanpe dou sepulchro de Crist*"; "*L'Angel ven en vision pour mesajes de Dieu à un Veschevo qe moult estoient home d's sante vite*"; "*E certes il estoit bien beizongno*"; "*ne trop cant ne trop fredo*"; "*la crense*" (*credenza*); "*remort*" for noise (*rumore*); "*inverno*"; "*jorno*"; "*dementiqué*" (*dimenticato*); "*enferme*" for sickly; "*leign*" (*legno*); "*devisce*" (*dovizia*); "*ammalaide*" (*ammalato*), &c., &c.

Professor Bianconi points out that there are also traces of Venetian dialect, as *Pare* for *père*; *Moyer* for wife; *Zabater*, cobbler; *casoor*, huntsman, &c.

† As examples of such Orientalisms: *Bonus*, "ebony," and *calamans*, "pen-cases," seem to represent the Persian *abnu* and *alamdan*; the dead are mourned by *les mères et les Araines*, the *Harem*; in speaking of the land of the Ismaelites or Assassins, called *Mulhete*, i.e., the Arabic *Mulhidah*, "Heretics," he explains this term as meaning "*des Aram*" (*Harāmīya*, "the reprobrates or malefactors"). Speaking of the Viceroy's of Chinese Provinces we are told that they rendered their



sistent with the supposition that we have in this MS. a copy at least of the original words as written down by Rusticiano a Tuscan, from the dictation of Marco an Orientalized Venetian, in French, a language foreign to both.

But the character of the language *as French* is not its only peculiarity. There is in the style, apart from grammar or vocabulary, a rude angularity, a rough dramatism like that of oral narrative; there is a want of proportion in the style of different parts, now over curt, now diffuse and wordy, with at times even a hammering reiteration; a constant recurrence of pet colloquial phrases (in which, however, other literary works of the age partake); a frequent change in the spelling of the same proper names, even when recurring within a few lines, as if caught by ear only; a literal following to and fro of the hesitations of the narrator; a more general use of the third person in speaking of the Traveller, but an occasional lapse into the first. All these characteristics are strikingly indicative of the unrevised product of dictation, and many of them would *necessarily* disappear either in translation or in a revised copy.

Of changes in representing the same proper name, take as an example that of the Kaan of Persia whom Polo calls *Quiacatu* (Kaikhátú), but also *Acatu*, *Catu*, and the like.

As an example of the literal following of dictation take the following:—

“Let us leave Rosia, and I will tell you about the Great Sea (the Euxine), and what provinces and nations lie round about it, all in detail; and we will begin with Constantinople—First, however, I should tell you about a province, &c. . . . There is nothing more worth mentioning, so I will speak of other subjects,—but there is one thing more to tell you about Rosia that I had forgotten. . . . Now then let us speak of the Great Sea as I was about to do. To be sure many merchants and others have been there, but still there are many again who know nothing about it, so it will be well to include it in our Book. We will do so then, and let us begin first with the Strait of Constantinople.

“At the Straits leading into the Great Sea, on the West Side, there is a hill called the Faro.—But since beginning on this matter I have changed my mind, because so many people know all about it, so we will not put it in our description but go on to something else.” (See vol. II. pp. 418 *seqq.*)

And so on.

As a specimen of tautology and hammering reiteration the

accounts yearly to the *Safators* of the Great Kaan. This is certainly an Oriental word, and probably represents *Hishdár* “an accountant.”

following can scarcely be surpassed. The Traveller is speaking of the *Chughi*, i.e., the Indian Jogis :—

“ And there are among them certain devotees, called *Chughi*; these are longer-lived than the other people, for they live from 150 to 200 years; and yet they are so hale of body that they can go and come wheresoever they please, and do all the service needed for their monastery or their idols, and do it just as well as if they were younger; and that comes of the great abstinence that they practise, in eating little food and only what is wholesome; for they use to eat rice and milk more than anything else. And again I tell you that these *Chughi* who live such a long time as I have told you, do also eat what I am going to tell you, and you will think it a great matter. For I tell you that they take quicksilver and sulphur, and mix them together, and make a drink of them, and then they drink this, and they say that it adds to their life; and in fact they do live much longer for it; and I tell you that they do this twice every month. And let me tell you that these people use this drink from their infancy in order to live longer, and without fail those who live so long as I have told you use this drink of sulphur and quicksilver.” (See G. T. p. 213.)

Such talk as this does not survive the solvent of translation; and we may be certain that we have here the nearest approach to the Traveller's reminiscences as they were taken down from his lips in the prison of Genoa.

53. Another circumstance, heretofore I believe unnoticed, is in itself enough to demonstrate the Geographic Text to be the source of all other versions of the Work. It is this.

In reviewing the various classes or types of texts of Polo's Book, which we shall hereafter attempt to discriminate, there are certain proper names which we find in the different texts to take very different forms, each class adhering in the main to one particular form.

Conclusive proof that the Old French Text is the source of all the others.

Thus the names of the Mongol ladies introduced at p. 30, 31 of this volume, which are in proper Oriental form *Bulughán* and *Kukáchin*, appear in the class of MSS. which Pauthier has followed as *Bolgara* and *Cogatra*; in the MSS. of Pipino's version, and those founded on it, including Ramusio, the names appear in the correcter forms *Bolgana* or *Balgana* and *Cogacin*. Now all the forms *Bolgana*, *Balgana*, *Bolgara*, and *Cogatra*, *Cocacin* appear in the *Geographic Text*.

Kaikhatu Kaan appears in the Pauthier MSS. as *Chiato*, in the Pipinian as *Acatu*, in the Ramusian as *Chiacato*. All three forms, *Chiato*, *Achatu*, and *Quiacatu* are found in the *Geographic Text*.

The city of Koh-banan appears in the Pauthier MSS. as

*Cabanant*, in the Pipinian and Ramusian editions as *Cobinam* or *Cobinan*. Both forms are found in the *Geographic Text*.

The city of the Great Kaan (Khanbalig) is called in the Pauthier MSS. *Cambaluc*, in the Pipinian and Ramusian less correctly *Cambalu*. Both forms appear in the *Geographic Text*.

The aboriginal People on the Burmese Frontier who received from the Western officers of the Mongols the Persian name (translated from that applied by the Chinese) of *Zardandân*, or Gold-Teeth, appear in the Pauthier MSS. most accurately as *Zardandan*, but in the Pipinian as *Ardandan* (still further corrupted in some copies into *Arcladam*). Now both forms are found in the *Geographic Text*. Other examples might be given, but these I think may suffice to prove that this Text was the common source of both classes.

In considering the question of the French original too we must remember what has been already said regarding Rusticien de Pise and his other French writings; and we shall find hereafter an express testimony borne in the next generation that Marco's Book was composed in *Vulgari Gallico*.

54. But, after all, the circumstantial evidence that has been adduced from the texts themselves is the most conclusive. We have then every reason to believe both that the work was written in French, and that an existing French Text is a close representation of it as originally committed to paper. And that being so we may cite some circumstances to show that the use of French or quasi-French for the purpose was not a fact of a very unusual or surprising nature. The French language had at that time almost as wide, perhaps relatively a wider, diffusion than it has now. It was still spoken at the Court of England, and still used by many English writers, of whom the authors or translators of the Round Table romances at Henry III.'s Court are examples.\* At certain of the Oxford Colleges as late as 1328 it was an order that the students should converse *colloquio latino*

\* Lucès de Gast, one of the first of these introduces himself thus:—"Je Lucès, Chevaliers et Sires du Chastel du Gast, voisins prochains de Salebières, comme chevaliers amoureux enpres à translater du Latin en François une partie de cette estoire; non mie pour ce que je sache gralement de François, ainz appartient plus ma langue et ma paroleure à la manière de l'Engleterre que à celle de France, comme cel qui fu en Engleterre nez, mais tel est ma volentez et mon proposement, que je en langue françoise le translaterai" (*Hist. Litt. de la France*, xv. 494).

*vel saltem gallico.\** Late in the same century Gower had not ceased to use French, composing many poems in it, though apologizing for his want of skill therein :—

“ Et si jeo nai de Francois la faconde

\* \* \* \* \*

Jeo suis Englois ; si quier par tiele voie  
Estre excusé.” †

Indeed down to nearly 1385 boys in the English grammar-schools were taught to construe their Latin lessons into French. ‡ St. Francis of Assisi is said by some of his biographers to have had his original name changed to Francesco because of his early mastery of that language as a qualification for commerce. French had been the prevalent tongue of the Crusaders, and was that of the numerous Frank Courts which they established in the East, including Jerusalem and the states of the Syrian coast, Cyprus, Constantinople during the reign of the Courtenays, and the principalities of the Morea. The Catalan soldier and chronicler Ramon de Muntaner tells us that it was commonly said of the Morean chivalry that they spoke as good French as at Paris. § Quasi-French at least was still spoken half a century later by the numerous Christians settled at Aleppo, as John Marignolli testifies ; || and if we may trust Sir John Maundevile the Soldan of Egypt himself and four of his chief Lords “ *spak Frensche righte wel !* ” ¶ Ghazan Kaan, the accomplished Mongol Sovereign of Persia, to whom our Traveller conveyed a bride from Cambaluc, is said by the historian Rashiduddin to have known something of the Frank tongue, probably French. \*\* Nay, if we may trust the author of the Romance of Richard Coeur-de-Lion, French was in his day the language of still higher spheres ! ††

\* *Hist. Litt. de la France*, xv. 500.

† *Ibid.* 508.

‡ *Tyrrwhill's Essay on Lang., &c. of Chaucer*, p. xxii. (Moxon's Ed. 1852.)

§ *Chroniques Etrangères*, p. 502.

|| “ *Loquuntur linguam quasi Gallicam, scilicet quasi de Cipro.* ” (See *Cathay*, p. 352.) ¶ P. 138.

\*\* *Hammer's Ilchan*. II. 148.

†† After the capture of Acre, Richard orders 60,000 Saracen prisoners to be executed :—

‘ They wer brought out off the toun  
Save twenty he heeld to raunsoun.  
They wer led into the Place full even ;  
Ther they herden Aungels off Hevene,

*They sayde* : ‘ SKYNYORS, TUEZ, TUEZ !  
‘ Spares hem nought ! Behedith these ! ’  
King Rycharde herde the Aungelys voys  
And thankyd God and the Holy Croys.”

—Weber, II. 144.

Note that, from the rhyme, the Angelic French was apparently pronounced “ *Too-esse ! Too-esse !* ”

Nor was Polo's case an exceptional one even among writers on the East who were not Frenchmen. Maundevile himself tells us that he put his book first "out of Latyn into Frensche," and then out of French into English. The History of the East which the Armenian Prince and Friar Hayton dictated to Nicolas Faulcon at Poitiers in 1307 was taken down in French. There are many other instances of the employment of French by foreign, and especially by Italian authors of that age. The Latin chronicle of the Benedictine Amato of Monte Cassino was translated into French early in the 13th century by another monk of the same abbey, at the particular desire of the Count of Militrée (or Malta), "*Pour ce qu'il set lire et entendre fransoise et s'en delitte.*" \* Martino da Canale, a countryman and contemporary of Polo's, during the absence of the latter in the East wrote a Chronicle of Venice in the same language, as a reason for which he alleges its general popularity.† The like does the most notable example of all, Brunetto Latini, Dante's master, who wrote in French his encyclopædic and once highly popular work *Li Tresor*.‡ Other examples might be given, but in fact such illustration is superfluous when we consider that Rusticiano himself was a compiler of French Romances.

But why the language of the Book as we see it in the Geographic Text should be so much more rude, inaccurate, and Italianized than that of Rusticiano's other writings, is a question to which I can suggest no reply quite satisfactory to myself. Is it possible that we have in it a literal representation of Polo's own language in dictating the story,—a rough draft which it was intended afterwards to reduce to better form, and which was so reduced (after a fashion) in French copies of another type, regarding which we shall have to speak presently?§ And, if this be the true answer, why

\* *L'Ystoire de li Normand*, &c., edited by M. Champollion-Figeac, Paris 1835, p. v.

† "*Porce que langue Franceise cort parmi le monde, et est la plus delitable à lire et à oir que nule autre, me sui-je ntremis de translater l'ancien estoire des Veneciens de Latin en Franceis.*" (Archiv. Stor. Ital. viii. 268).

‡ "*Et se aucun demandoit porquoi cist livre est escriz en Romans, selonc le langage des Francois, puisque nos somes Ytaliens, je diroie que ce est por ij raisons: l'une, car nos somes en France; et l'autre porce que la parleur est plus delitable et plus commune à toutes gens.*" (Li Livres dou Tresor, p. 3.)

§ It is, however, not improbable that Rusticiano's hasty and abbreviated original was extended by a scribe who knew next to nothing of French; other-

should Polo have used a French jargon in which to tell his story? Is it possible that his own mother Venetian, such as he had carried to the East with him and brought back again, was so little intelligible to Rusticiano that French of some kind was the handiest medium of communication between the two? I have seen an Englishman and a Hollander driven to converse in Malay; Chinese Christians of different provinces are said sometimes to take to English as the readiest means of intercommunication; and the same is said even of Irish-speaking Irishmen from remote parts of the Island.

It is worthy of remark how many notable narratives of the Middle Ages have been dictated instead of being written by their authors, and that in cases where it is impossible to ascribe this to ignorance of writing. The Armenian Hayton, though evidently a well read man, probably could not write in Roman characters. But Joinville is an illustrious example. And the narratives of four of the most famous Medieval Travellers \* seem to have been drawn from them by a kind of pressure, and committed to paper by other hands. I have elsewhere remarked this as indicating how little diffused was literary ambition or vanity; but it would perhaps be more correct to ascribe it to that intense dislike which is still seen on the shores of the Mediterranean to the use of pen and ink. On certain of those shores at least there is scarcely any inconvenience that the majority of respectable and good-natured people will not tolerate—inconvenience to their neighbours be it understood—rather than put pen to paper for the purpose of preventing it.

#### X. VARIOUS TYPES OF TEXT OF MARCO POLO'S BOOK.

55. In treating of the various Texts of Polo's Book we must necessarily go into some irksome detail.

Those Texts that have come down to us may be classified under Four principal Types.

I. The First Type is that of the Geographic

Four Principal Types of Text.  
First, that of the Geographic, or oldest French.

wise it is hard to account for such forms as *perlinage* (*pélerinage*), *peseries* (*epiceries*), *proque* (see vol. ii. p. 305), *oisi* (G. T. p. 208), *thochere* (*toucher*), &c. (see *Bianconi*, 2nd Mem. pp. 30-32).

\* Polo, Friar Odoric, Nicolo Conti, Ibn Batuta.

Text of which we have already said so much. This is found nowhere *complete* except in the unique MS. of the Paris Library, to which it is stated to have come from the old Library of the French Kings at Blois. But the Italian *Crusca*, and the old Latin version (No. 3195 of the Paris Library) published with the Geographic Text are evidently derived entirely from it, though both are considerably abridged. It is also demonstrable that neither of these copies has been translated from the other, for each has passages which the other omits, but that both have been taken, the one as a copy more or less loose, the other as a translation, from an intermediate *Italian* copy.\* A special difference lies in the fact

\* In the following citations, the Geographic Text (G.T.) is quoted by page from the printed edition (1824); the Latin published in the same volume (G.L.) also by page; the *Crusca*, as before, from Bartoli's edition of 1863. References in parentheses are to the present translation:—

A. Passages showing the G.L. to be a translation from the Italian, and derived from the same Italian text as the *Crusca*.

	Page		
(1).	G.T. 17 (I. 43).	Il hi se laborent le <i>souran tapis</i> dou monde.	
	<i>Crusca</i> , 17 ..	E quivi si fanno i <i>sorvani tappeti</i> del mondo.	
	G.L. 311 ..	Et ibi fiunt <i>soriani et tapeti</i> pulciores de mundo.	
(2).	G.T. 23 (., 65).	Et adonc le calif mande parutit les <i>cristienz</i> . . .	
		<i>qui en sa tere estoient.</i>	
	<i>Crusca</i> , 27 ..	Ora <i>mandò</i> lo califfo per tutti gli Cristiani <i>ch'erano di là.</i>	
	G.L. 316 ..	Or misit califfus pro Cristianis <i>qui erant ultra fluvium</i> (the last words being clearly a misunderstanding of the Italian <i>di là</i> ).	
(3).	G.T. 198 (II. 254).	Ont <i>sosimain</i> (sesamum) de coi il font le olio.	
	<i>Crusca</i> , 253 ..	Hanno <i>sosimani</i> onde fanno l' olio.	
	G.L. 448 ..	Habent <i>turpes manus</i> (taking <i>sosimani</i> for <i>sozze mani</i> "dirty hands" !)	
(4).	<i>Crusca</i> , 52 (I. 150).	<i>Cacciare et uccellare v'</i> è lo migliore del mondo.	
	G.L. 332 ..	Et est ibi optimum <i>caciare et uccellare.</i>	
(5).	G.T. 124 (II. 22).	Adonc treuve . . . un Provence <i>qe est encore</i> de le confin dou Mangi.	
	<i>Crusca</i> , 162-3 ..	L' uomo truova una Provincia <i>ch' è chiamata ancora</i> delle confine di Mangi.	
	G.L. 396 ..	Invenit unam Provinciam <i>quae vocatur Anchota</i> de confinibus Mangi.	
(6).	G.T. 146 (., 82).	Les dames portent as jambes et es braces braciaus d'or et d'argent <i>le grandisme</i> vaillance.	
	<i>Crusca</i> , 189 ..	Le donne <i>portano alle braccia e alle gambe bracciali d'oro</i> e d'ariento di gran valuta.	
	G.L. 411 ..	<i>Dominæ eorum portant ad bracia et ad gambas braxalia de auro et de argento magni valoris.</i>	

that the Latin version is divided into three Books, whilst the Crusca has no such division. I shall show in a tabular form the *filiation* of the texts which these facts seem to demonstrate (see Appendix G).

There are other Italian MSS. of this type, some of which show signs of having been derived independently from the French;\* but I have not been able to examine any of them with the care needful to make specific deductions regarding them.

56. II. The next Type is that of the French MSS. on which M. Pauthier's Text is based, and for which he claims the highest authority, as having had the mature revision and sanction of the Traveller. There are, as far as I know, five MSS. which may be classed together under this type, three in the Great Paris Library, one at Bern, and one in the Bodleian.

Second ;  
the re-  
modelled  
French  
Text, fol-  
lowed by  
Pauthier.

The high claims made by Pauthier on behalf of this class of MSS. (on the first three of which his Text is formed) rest mainly upon the kind of certificate which two of them bear regarding the presentation of a copy by Marco Polo to Thibault de Cepoy, which we have already quoted (*supra*, p. xcvi). This certificate is held by Pauthier to imply that the original of the copies which bear it, and of those having a general

B. Passages showing additionally the errors, or other peculiarities of a translation from a French original, common to the Italian and the Latin.

	Page		
(7). G.T.	32 (l. 91).	Est celle plainne mont <i>chane</i> (chande).	
Crusca.	35 ..	Questo piano è molto <i>rope</i> .	
G.L.	322 ..	Ista planities est multum <i>arva</i> .	
(8). G.T.	32 (., 104).	Avent porceque l'eine hi est <i>arve</i> .	
Crusca.	40 ..	E questo è <i>per lo mar</i> , che vi viene.	
G.L.	324 ..	Istud est <i>propter mar</i> , quod est ibi.	
(9). G.T.	18 (., 49).	Un roi qi est apelés par tout teas Davit Melic qi veut à dire <i>en fransois</i> Davit Roi.	
Crusca.	20 ..	Uno re il quale si chiama <i>sempre</i> David Melic, cio è a dire <i>in francesco</i> David Re.	
G.L.	312 ..	Rex qui <i>semper</i> vocatur David Mellic quod sonat <i>in gallico</i> David Rex.	

These passages, and many more that might be quoted, seem to me to demonstrate (1) that the Latin and the Crusca have had a common original, and (2) that this original was an Italian version from the French.

\* Thus the *Pucci* MS. at Florence, in the passage regarding the Golden King (vol. ii. p. 8) which begins in G. T. "*Lequel fist faire jadis un rois qe fu appellés Roi d'Or*," renders "*Lo quale fa fare jaddis uno re*," a mistake which is not in the Crusca nor in the Latin, and seems to imply derivation from the French directly, or by some other channel (*Baldello-Boni*).



correspondence with them, had the special seal of Marco's revision and approval. To some considerable extent their character is corroborative of such a claim, but they are far from having the perfection which Pauthier attributes to them, and which leads him into many paradoxes.

It is not possible to interpret rigidly the bearing of this so-called certificate, as if no copies had previously been taken of *any* form of the Book; nor can we allow it to impugn the authenticity of the Geographic Text, which demonstratively represents an older original, and has been (as we have seen) the parent of all other versions, including some very old ones, Italian and Latin, which certainly owe nothing to this revision.

The first idea apparently entertained by M. D'Avezac and M. Paulin-Paris was that the Geographic Text was *itself* the copy given to the Sieur de Cepoy, and that the differences in the copies of the class which we describe as Type II. merely resulted from the modifications which would naturally arise in the process of transcription into purer French. But closer examination showed the differences to be too great and too marked to admit of this explanation. These differences consist not only in the conversion of the rude, obscure, and half Italian language of the original into good French of the period. There is also very considerable curtailment, generally of tautology, but also extending often to circumstances of substantial interest; whilst we observe the omission of a few notably erroneous statements or expressions; and a few insertions of small importance. None of the MSS. of this class contain more than a few of the historical chapters which we have formed into Book IV.

The only *addition* of any magnitude is that chapter which in our Translation forms chapter xxi. of Book II. It will be seen that it contains no new facts, but is only a tedious recapitulation of circumstances already stated, though scattered over several chapters. There are a few minor additions. I have not thought it worth while to collect them systematically here, but two or three examples are given in a note.\*

\* In the Prologue (vol. i. p. 32) this class of MSS. alone names the King of England.

In the account of the Battle with Nayan (i. p. 301) this class alone speaks of the two-stringed instruments which the Tartars played whilst awaiting the signal for battle. But the circumstance appears elsewhere in the G. T. (p. 250). In

There are also one or two corrections of erroneous statements in the G, T which seem not to be accidental and to indicate some attempt at revision. Thus a notable error in the account of Aden, which seems to conceive of the Red Sea as a *river*, disappears in Pauthier's MSS. A and B.\* And we find in these MSS. one or two interesting names preserved which are not found in the older Text.†

But on the other hand this class of MSS. contains many erroneous readings of names, either adopting the worse of two forms occurring in the G. T. or originating blunders of its own.‡

M. Pauthier lays great stress on the character of these MSS. as the sole authentic form of the work, from their claim to have been specially revised by Marco Polo. It is evident, however, from what has been said, that this revision can have been only a very careless and superficial one, and must have been done in great measure by deputy, being almost entirely confined to curtailment and to the improvement of the expression, and that it is by no means such as to allow an editor to dispense with a careful study of the Older Text.

57. There is another curious circumstance about the MSS. of this type, viz., that they clearly divide into two distinct recensions, of which both have so many peculiarities and errors in common that they must necessarily have been both derived from *one* modification of the original text, whilst at the same time there are such

The Bern MS. and two others form a subclass of this Type.

In the chapter on *Mahabar* (vol. ii. p. 325), it is said that the ships which go with cargoes towards Alexandria are not one-tenth of those that go to the further East. This is not in the older French.

In the chapter on *Coilun* (II. p. 312), we have a notice of the Columbine ginger so celebrated in the middle ages, which is also absent from the older text.

\* See vol. ii. p. 374. It is however remarkable that a like mistake is made about the Persian Gulf (see I. 60, 61). Perhaps Polo *thought* in Persian, in which the word *darya* means either *sea* or a *large river*. The same habit and the ambiguity of the Persian *sher* led him probably to his confusion of lions and tigers (see I. 354).

† Such are *Pascial-Dir* and *Ariora Kesciemur* (I. p. 93).

‡ Thus the MSS. of this type have elected the erroneous readings *Bolgara*, *Cogatra*, *Chiato*, *Cabanant*, &c., instead of the correcter *Bolguna*, *Cocarin*, *Quiacatu*, *Cobinan*, where the G.T. presents both (*supra*, p. lxxviii). They read *Esanar* for the correct *Etsin*; *Chacun* for *Carvin*; *Achalat* for *Acbalec*; *Sardansu* for *Sindafu*; *Kayten*, *Kayton*, *Sarcon* for *Zaiton* or *Caiton*; *Soucat* for *Locac*; *Falec* for *Ferlec*, and so on, the worse instead of the better. They make the *Mer Oceane* into *Mer Occident*; the wild asses (*as* &c.) of the Keriman Desert into wild geese (*oes*); the *esroilles* of Bengal (II. p. 79) into *esroliers*; the *giraffes* of Africa into *girofes*, or cloves, &c. &c.

differences between the two as cannot be set down to the accidents of transcription. Pauthier's MSS. A and B (Nos. 16 and 15 of the List in Appendix F) form one of these subdivisions: his C (No. 17 of the same list), Bern (No. 56), and Oxford (No. 6), the other. Between A and B the differences are only such as seem constantly to have arisen from the whims of transcribers or their dialectic peculiarities. But between A and B on the one side, and C on the other the differences are much greater. The readings of proper names in C are often superior, sometimes worse; but in the latter half of the work especially it contains a number of substantial passages\* which are to be found in the G. T., but are altogether absent from the MSS. A and B; whilst in one case at least (the history of the Siege of Saianfu, vol. ii. p. 121) it diverges considerably from the G. T. *as well* as from A and B.†

I gather from the facts that the MS. C represents an older form of the work than A and B. I should judge that the latter had been derived from that older form but intentionally modified from it. And as it is the MS. C, with its copy at Bern, that alone presents the certificate of derivation from the Book given to the Sieur de Cepoy, there can be no doubt that it is the true representative of that recension.

58. The next Type of Text is that found in Friar Pipino's Latin version. It is the type of which MSS. are by far the most numerous. In it condensation and curtailment are carried a good deal further than in Type II. The work is also divided into three Books. But this division does not seem to have originated with Pipino, as we find it in the ruder and perhaps older Latin version of which we have already spoken under Type I. And we have demonstrated that this ruder Latin is a translation from an Italian copy. It is probable therefore that an Italian version similarly divided was the common source of what we call the Geographic Latin and of Pipino's more condensed version.‡

Third :  
Friar Pi-  
pino's Latin.

\* There are about five and thirty such passages altogether.

† The Bern MS. I have satisfied myself is an actual copy of the Paris MS. C. The Oxford MS. closely resembles both, but I have not made the comparison minutely enough to say if it is an exact copy of either.

‡ The following comparison will also show that these two Latin versions have probably had a common source, such as is here suggested.

At the end of the Prologue the Geographic Text reads simply :— " Or

Pipino's version appears to have been executed in the later years of Polo's life.\* But I can see no ground for the idea entertained by Baldello-Boni and Professor Bianconi that it was executed with Polo's cognizance and retouched by him.

59. The absence of effective publication in the Middle Ages led to a curious complication of translation and retranslation. Thus the Latin version published by Grynæus in the *Novus Orbis* † is different from Pipino's, and yet is clearly traceable to it as a foundation. In fact it is a retranslation into Latin from some version (Marsden thinks the printed Portuguese one) of Pipino. It introduces many minor modifications, omitting specific statements of numbers and values, generalizing the names and descriptions of specific animals, exhibiting frequent sciolism and self-sufficiency in modifying statements which the Editor supposed to be fictions.‡ It is therefore utterly worthless as a Text, and it is curious that Andreas Muller, who in the 17th century devoted himself to the careful editing of Polo, should have made so unfortunate a choice as to reproduce this fifth-hand Translation. I may add that the French editions published in the middle of the 16th century are *translations* from Grynæus. Hence they complete this curious circle of translation: French—Italian—Pipino's Latin—Portuguese?—Grynæus's Latin—French!

\* 60. IV. We now come to a Type of Text which deviates

"Or puis que je voz ai contez tot le fat dou prologue ensi con voz avés oï, adonc (comencerai) le Livre."

Whilst the Geographic Latin has:—

"Post quam recitavimus et diximus facta et conditiones nostrorum itinerum, et ea quæ nobis contigerunt per vias, incipimus dicere ea quæ vidimus. Et primo de Minori Harmonia."

And Pipino:—

"Narratione facta nostri itineris, nunc ad ea narranda quæ vidimus accedamus. Primo autem Armeniam Minorem describemus breviter."

\* Friar Francesco Pipino of Bologna, a Dominican, is known also as the author of a lengthy chronicle from the time of the Frank Kings down to 1314; of a Latin Translation of the French History of the Conquest of the Holy Land, by Bernard the Treasurer; and of a short Itinerary of a Pilgrimage to Palestine in 1320. Extracts from the Chronicle, and the version of Bernard, are printed in Muratori's Collection. As Pipino states himself to have executed the translation of Polo by order of his Superiors, it is probable that the task was set him at a general chapter of the order which was held at Bologna in 1315 (see *Muratori*, IX. 583; and *Quittis, Script. Ord. Præd.* I. 539). We do not know what ground Ramusio had for assigning the translation specifically to 1320, but he may have had authority.

† Basle, 1532.

‡ See *Bianconi*, 1st Mem. 29 seqq.

largely from any of those hitherto spoken of, and the history and true character of which are involved in a cloud of difficulty.

Fourth:  
Ramusio's  
Italian.

We mean that Italian version prepared for the press by G. B. Ramusio, with most interesting, though, as we have seen, not always accurate preliminary dissertations, and published at Venice two years after his death, in the second volume of the *Navigazioni e Viaggi*.\*

The peculiarities of this version are very remarkable. Ramusio seems to imply that he used as one basis at least the Latin of Pipino; and many circumstances, such as the division into Books, the absence of the terminal historical chapters and of those about the Magi, and the form of many proper names, confirm this. But also many additional circumstances and anecdotes are introduced, many of the names assume a new form, and the whole style is more copious and literary in character than in any other form of the work.

Whilst some of the changes or interpolations seem to carry us further from the truth, others contain facts of Asiatic nature or history, as well as of Polo's own experiences, which it is extremely difficult to ascribe to any hand but the Traveller's own. This was the view taken by Baldello, Klaproth, and Neumann;† but Hugh Murray, Lazari, and Bartoli regard the changes as interpolations by another hand; and Lazari is rash enough to ascribe the whole to a *rifacimento* of Ramusio's own age, asserting it to contain interpolations not merely from Polo's own contemporary Hayton, but also from travellers of later centuries, such as Conti, Barbosa, and Pigafetta.

\* The Ramusios were a family of note in literature for several generations. Paulo, the father of Gian Battista, came originally from Rimini to Venice in 1458, and had a great repute as a jurist, besides being a littérateur of some eminence, as was also his younger brother Girolamo. G. B. Ramusio was born at Treviso in 1485, and early entered the public service. In 1533 he became one of the Secretaries of the Council of X. He was especially devoted to geographical studies, and had a school for such studies in his house. He retired eventually from public duties, and lived at his Villa Ramusia, near Padua. He died in the latter city, 10th July, 1557, but was buried at Venice in the Church of S. Maria dell' Orto. There was a portrait of him by Paul Veronese in the Hall of the Great Council, but it perished in the fire of 1577; and that which is now seen in the Sala dello Scudo is, like the companion portrait of Marco Polo, imaginary. Paulo Ramusio, his son, was the author of the well-known History of the Capture of Constantinople (*Cronaca*, II. 310 *segg.*).

† The old French texts were unknown in Marsden's time. Hence this question did not present itself to him.

The grounds for these last assertions have not been cited, nor can I trace them. •But I admit *to a certain extent* indications of modern tampering with the text, especially in cases where proper names seem to have been identified and more modern forms substituted. In days, however, where an Editor's duties were ill understood this was natural.

61. Thus we find substituted for the *Bastra* (or *Basera*) of the older texts the more modern and incorrect *Balsora*, dear to memories of the Arabian Nights; among the provinces of Persia we have *Spaan* (Ispahan) where older texts read *Istanit*; for *Cormos* we have *Ormus*; for *Hermunia* and *Laias*, *Armenia* and *Giazza*; *Coulam* for the older *Coilum*; *Socotera* for *Scotra*. With these changes may be classed the chapter-headings, which are undisguisedly modern, and probably Ramusio's own. In some other cases this editorial spirit has been over meddlesome and has gone astray. Thus *Malabar* is substituted wrongly for *Maabar* in one place, and by a still grosser error for *Dalivar* in another. The age of young Marco, at the time of his father's first return to Venice, has been arbitrarily altered from 15 to 19, in order to correspond with a date which is itself erroneous. Thus also Polo is made to describe Ormus as on an island, contrary to the old texts and to the fact; for the city of Hormuz was not transferred to the island, afterwards so famous, for some years after Polo's return from the East. It is probably also the editor who in the notice of the oil-springs of Caucasus (I. p. 46) has substituted *camel-loads* for *ship-loads*, in ignorance that the site of those alluded to was probably Baku on the Caspian.

Other erroneous statements, such as the introduction of window glass as one of the embellishments of the palace at Cambaluc, are probably due only to accidental misunderstanding.

62. Of circumstances certainly genuine, which are peculiar to this edition of Polo's work, and which it is difficult to assign to any one but himself, we may note the specification of the woods east of Yezd as composed of *date-trees* (vol. i. pp. 84, 85); the unmistakable allusion to the subterranean irrigation channels of Persia (p. 115); the accurate explanation of the term *Mulehet* applied to the sect of Assassins (p. 133); the mention of the Lake (Sirikul) on the plateau of

Injudicious  
tamperings  
in Ramusio.

Genuine  
statements  
peculiar to  
Ramusio.

Pamer, of the wolves that prey on the wild sheep, and of the piles of wild ram's horns used as landmarks in the snow (pp. 163-167). To the description of the Tibetan Yak, which is in all the texts, Ramusio's version alone adds a fact probably not recorded again till the present century, viz., that it is the practice to cross the Yak with the common cow (p. 241). Ramusio alone notices the prevalence of *gottre* at Yarkand, confirmed by recent travellers (I. p. 173); the vermilion seal of the Great Kaan imprinted on the paper currency, which may be seen in our plates of Chinese notes (p. 379); the variation in Chinese dialects (II. p. 186); the division of the hulls of junks into water-tight compartments (II. p. 195); the introduction into China from Egypt of the art of refining sugar (II. p. 180). Ramusio's account of the position of the city of Sindafu (Chingtufu) encompassed and intersected by many branches of a great river (II. p. 15), is much more just than that in the old texts which speaks of but one river through the middle of the city. The intelligent notices of the Kaan's charities as originated by his adoption of "idolatry" or Buddhism; of the astrological superstitions of the Chinese, and of the manners and character of the latter nation, are found in Ramusio alone. To whom but Marco himself, or one of his party, can we refer the brief but vivid picture of the delicious atmosphere and scenery of the Badakhshan plateaux (I. pp. 150, 151), and of the benefit that Messer Marco's health derived from a visit to them? In this version alone again we have an account of the oppressions exercised by Kublai's Mahomedan Minister Ahmad, telling how the Cathayans rose against him and murdered him, with the addition that Messer Marco was on the spot when all this happened. Now not only is the whole story in substantial accordance with the Chinese Annals, even to the name of the chief conspirator,\* but those annals also

\* *Wangchen* in the Chinese Annals; *Vanchu* in Ramusio. I assume that Polo's *Vanchu* was pronounced as in English; for in Venetian the *ch* very often has that sound. But I confess that I can adduce no other instance in Ramusio where I suppose it to have this sound, except the doubtful ones *Chinchintalas* and *Choiach* (see II. 300).

Professor Bianconi who has treated the questions connected with the Texts of Polo with honest enthusiasm and laborious detail, will admit nothing genuine in the Ramusian interpolations beyond the preservation of some *oral traditions* of Polo's supplementary recollections. But such a theory is out of the question in face of a chapter like that on Ahmad.

tell of the courageous frankness of "Polo, assessor of the Privy Council," in opening the Kaan's eyes to the truth.

Many more such examples might be adduced, but these will suffice. It is true that many of the passages peculiar to the Ramusian version, and indeed the whole version, show a freer utterance and more of a literary faculty than we should attribute to Polo, judging from the earlier texts. It is possible, however, that this may be almost, if not entirely, due to the fact that the version is the result of a double translation, and probably of an editorial fusion<sup>2</sup> of several documents; processes in which angularities of expression would be dissolved.\*

63. Though difficulties will, certainly remain,† the most

\* Old Purchas appears to have greatly relished Ramusio's comparative lucidity: "I found (says he) this Booke translated by Master Hakluyt out of the Latine (*i.e.* among Hakluyt's MS. collections). But where the blind leade the blind both fall: as here corrupt *Latine* could not but yeld a corruption of truth in English. Ramusio, Secretarie to the *Deemster in Venice*, found a better copie and published the same, whence you have the worke in manner new: so renewed that I have found the Proverbe true, that it is better to pull downe an old house and to build it anew, than to repaire it; as I also should have done, had I knowne that which in the event I found. The *Latine* is Latten, compared to Ramusio's Gold. And hee which hath the Latine hath but Marco Polo's carkasse or not so much, but a few bones, yea sometimes stones rather than bones: things divers, averse, adverse, perverted in matter, disjoynted in manner, beyond belief. I have seene some authors maymed, but never any so margled and so mingled, so present and so absent, as the vulgar *Latine* of Marco Polo; not so like himselfe as the Three Polo's were at their returne to *Venice* where none knew them. . . . Much are wee beholden to *Ramusio* for restoring this *Pole* and Load-starre of *Asia* out of the mirie poole or puddle in which he lay drowned." (III. p. 65.)

† Of these difficulties the following are some of the more prominent:—

1. The mention of the death of Kublai (see note 7, p. 36 of this volume), whilst throughout the book Polo speaks of Kublai as if still reigning.

2. Mr. Hugh Murray objects that whilst in the old texts Polo appears to look on Kublai with reverence as a faultless Prince, in the Ramusian we find passages of an opposite tendency, as in the chapter about Ahmad.

3. The same editor points to the manner in which one of the Ramusian additions represents the traveller to have visited the Palace of the Chinese Kings at Kinsay, which he conceives to be inconsistent with Marco's position as an official of the Mongol Government (see vol. ii. p. 165).

If we could conceive the Ramusian additions to have been originally notes written by old Maffeo Polo on his nephew's book, this hypothesis would remove almost all difficulty.

One passage in Ramusio seems to bear a reference to the date at which these interpolated notes were amalgamated with the original. In the chapter on Samarkand (I. p. 170) the conversion of the Prince Chagatai is said in the old texts to have occurred "not a great while ago" (*il ne u encore gramant de tens*). But in Ramusio the supposed event is fixed at "one hundred and twenty-five years since." This number could not have been uttered with reference to 1298, the year of the dictation at Genoa, nor to any year of Polo's own life. Hence it is probable that the original note contained a date or definite term which was altered by the compiler to suit the date of his own compilation, some time in the 14th century.



probable explanation of the origin of this text seems to me to be some such hypothesis as the following :—I suppose that Polo in his latter years added with his own hand supplementary notes and reminiscences, marginally or otherwise, to a copy of his book ; that these, perhaps in his lifetime, more probably after his death, were digested and translated into Latin ;\* and that Ramusio, or some friend of his, in retranslating and fusing them with Pipino's version for the *Navigazioni*, made those minor modifications in names and other matters which we have already noticed. The mere facts of digestion from memoranda and double translation would account for a good deal of unintentional corruption.

That more than one version was employed in the composition of Ramusio's edition we have curious proof in at least one passage of the latter. We have pointed out at p. 364 of this volume a curious example of misunderstanding of the old French Text, a passage in which the term *Roi des Pelaines*, or "King of Furs," is applied to the Sable, and which in the Crusca has been converted into an imaginary Tartar phrase *Leroide pelame*, or as Pipino makes it *Rondes* (another indication that Pipino's Version and the Crusca passed through a common medium). But Ramusio exhibits *both* the true reading and the perversion : "*E li Tartari la chiamano Regina delle pelli*" (there is the true reading) "*E gli animali si chiamano Rondes*" (and there the perverted one).

We may further remark that Ramusio's version betrays indications that one of its bases either was in the Venetian dialect, or had passed through that dialect ; for a good many of the names appear in Venetian forms, *e.g.*, substituting the *s* for the sound of *ch*, *j*, or soft *g*, as in *Gosa*, *Zorzania*, *Zagatay*, *Gonza* (for Giogiu), *Quenzanfu*, *Coiganzu*, *Tapinzu*, *Zipangu*, *Ziamba*.

64. To sum up. It is, I think, beyond reasonable dispute

\* In the first edition of Ramusio the preface contained the following passage, which is omitted from the succeeding editions ; but as even the first edition was issued after Ramusio's own death, I do not see that any stress can be laid on this : "A copy of the Book of Marco Polo, as it was originally written in Latin, marvellously old, and perhaps directly copied from the original as it came from M. Marco's own hand, has been often consulted by me and compared with that which we now publish, having been lent me by a nobleman of this city, belonging to the Ca' Ghisi."

that we have, in what we call the Geographic Text, as nearly as may be an exact transcript of the Traveller's words as originally taken down in the prison of Genoa. We have again in the MSS. of the second type an edition pruned and refined, probably under instructions from Marco Polo, but not with any critical exactness. And lastly, I believe, that we have, imbedded in the Ramusian edition, the supplementary recollections of the Traveller, noted down at a later period of his life, but perplexed by repeated translation, compilation, and editorial mishandling.

And the most important remaining problem in regard to the text of Polo's work is the discovery of the supplemental manuscript from which Ramusio derived those passages which are found only in his edition. It is possible that it may still exist, but no trace of it in any thing like completeness has yet been found; though when my task was all but done I discovered a small part of the Ramusian peculiarities in a MS. at Venice.\*

\* For a moment I thought I had been lucky enough to light on a part of the missing original of Ramusio in the Barberini Library at Rome. A fragment of a Venetian version in that library (No. 49 in our list of MSS.) bore on the fly leaf the title "*Alcuni primi capi del Libro di S. Marco Polo, copiate dall' esemplare manoscritto di PAOLO RIANUSIO.*" But it proved to be of no importance. One brief passage of those which have been thought peculiar to Ramusio; viz., the reference to the Martyrdom of St. Blaize at Sebaste (see p. 44 of this volume), is found also in the Geographic Latin.

And I have pointed out at p. 59, after Lavari, that another passage, of those otherwise peculiar to Ramusio, is found in a somewhat abridged Latin version in a MS. which belonged to the late eminent antiquary Emanuel Cicogna (see List in Appendix F, No. 29). This fact induced me when recently at Venice to examine the MS. throughout, and, though I could give little time to it, the result was very curious.

I find that this MS. contains, not one only, but at least seven of the passages otherwise peculiar to Ramusio, and must have been one of the elements that went to the formation of his text. Yet of his more important interpolations, such as the chapter on Ahmad's oppressions and the additional matter on the City of Kinsay, there is no indication. The seven passages alluded to are as follows; the words corresponding to Ramusian peculiarities are in italics, the references are to my own volumes.

1. In the chapter on Georgia :  
 "Mare quod dicitur Gheluchelan *vel ABACU*" . . .  
 "Est ejus stricta via et dubia. Ab una parte est mare quod dixi de *ABACU* et ab aliâ nemora invia," &c. (See i. 50, 51, and note 8 at p. 56).
2. "Et ibi optimi austers *dicti AVIGI*" (i. 50).
3. After the chapter on Mosul is another short chapter, already alluded to :  
*"Prope hanc civitatem (est) alia provincia dicta. MUS e MEREDIEN in qua nascitur magna quantitas bombacis, et hic sunt bocharini et alia multa, et sunt mercatores homines et artiste"* (see i. p. 59).
4. In the chapter on *Tarcan* (for Carcan, i. c., Yarkand) : "Et



——— "Kings and chieftains of that city. There was then in the city a princely Friar in the habit of St. Francis, named Franciscus, who was versed in many languages. He was brought to the place where those nobles were, and they requested of him to translate the book from the Tartar (!) into the Latin language. 'It is an abomination to me,' said he, 'to devote my mind or labour to works of Idolatry and Irreligion.' They entreated him again. 'It shall be done,' said he; 'for though it be an irreligious narrative that is related therein, yet the things are miracles of the True God; and every one who hears this much against the Holy Faith shall pray fervently for their conversion. And he who will not pray shall waste the vigour of his body to convert them.' I am not in dread of this Book of Marcus, for there is no lie in it. My eyes beheld him bringing the felices of the holy Church with him, and he left [his testimony], whilst tasting of death, that it was true. And Marcus was a devout man. What is there in it, then, but that Franciscus translated this Book of Marcus from the Tartar into Latin; and the years of the Lord at that time were fifteen years, two score, two hundred, and one thousand" (1255).

It then describes *Armein Bec* (Little Armenia), *Armein Mor* (Great Armenia), *Musul*, *Taurisius*, *Persida*, *Camandi*, and so forth. The last chapter is that on *Abaschia* :—

"ABASCHIA also is an extensive country, under the government of Seven Kings, four of whom worship the true God, and each of them wears a golden cross on the forehead; and they are valiant in battle, having been brought up fighting against the Gentiles of the other three kings, who are Unbelievers and Idolaters. And the kingdom of ADEN; a Soudan rules over them.

"The king of Abaschia once took a notion to make a pilgrimage to the Sepulchre of Jesus. 'Not at all,' said his nobles and warriors to him, 'for we should be afraid lest the infidels through whose territories you would have to pass, should kill you. There is a Holy Bishop with you,' said they; 'send him to the Sepulchre of Jesus, and much gold with him' "———.

The rest is wanting.

#### XI. SOME ESTIMATE OF THE CHARACTER OF POLO AND HIS BOOK.

66. That Marco Polo has been so universally recognized as the King of Medieval Travellers is due rather to the width of his experience, the vast compass of his journeys, and the romantic nature of his personal history, than to transcendent superiority of character or capacity.

Grounds of  
Polo's pre-  
eminence  
among  
medieval  
travellers.

The generation immediately preceding his own has bequeathed to us, in the Report of the French Friar

William de Rubruquis,\* on the Mission with which St. Lewis charged him to the Tartar Courts, the narrative of one great journey, which, in its rich detail, its vivid pictures, its acuteness of observation and strong good sense, seems to me to form a Book of Travels of much higher claims than *any one series* of Polo's chapters ; a book, indeed, which has never had justice done to it, for it has few superiors in the whole Library of Travel.

Enthusiastic Biographers, beginning with Ramusio, have placed Polo on the same platform with Columbus. But where has our Venetian Traveller left behind him any trace of the genius and lofty enthusiasm, the ardent and justified provisions which mark the great Admiral as one of the lights of the human race ? † It is a juster praise that the spur which his Book eventually gave to geographical studies, and the beacons which it hung out, at the Eastern extremities of the Earth helped to guide the aims, though scarcely to kindle the fire, of the greater son of the rival Republic. His work was at least a link in the Providential chain which at last dragged the New World to light. ‡

\* M. D'Avezac has convincingly refuted the common supposition that this Friar was a Fleming rather than a Frenchman. But I cannot give the reference.

† High as Marco's name deserves to be set, his place is not beside the writer of such burning words as these addressed to Ferdinand and Isabella ; "From the most tender age I went to sea, and to this day I have continued to do so. Whosoever devotes himself to this craft must desire to know the secrets of Nature here below. For 40 years now have I thus been engaged, and wherever man has sailed hitherto on the face of the sea, thither have I sailed also. I have been in constant relation with men of learning, whether ecclesiastic or secular, Latins and Greeks, Jews and Moors, and men of many a sect besides. To accomplish this my longing (to know the Secrets of the World) I found the Lord favourable to my purposes ; it is He who hath given me the needful disposition and understanding. He bestowed upon me abundantly the knowledge of seamanship ; and of Astronomy he gave me enough to work withal, and so with Geometry and Arithmetic. . . . In the days of my youth I studied works of all kinds, history, chronicles, philosophy, and other arts, and to apprehend these the Lord opened my understanding. Under His manifest guidance I navigated hence to the Indies ; for it was the Lord who gave me the will to accomplish that task, and it was in the ardour of that will that I came before your Highnesses. All those who heard of my project scouted and derided it ; all the acquirements I have mentioned stood me in no stead ; and if in your Highnesses, and in you alone, Faith and Constancy endured, to Whom are due the Lights that have enlightened you as well as me, but to the Holy Spirit ?" (Quoted in *Humboldt's Examen Critique*, I. 17, 18.)

‡ M. Libri however speaks too strongly when he says : "The finest of all the results due to the influence of Marco Polo is that of having stirred Columbus to the discovery of the New World. Columbus, jealous of Polo's laurels, spent his life in preparing means to get to that Zipangu of which the Venetian traveller had

67. Surely Marco's real, indisputable, and, in their kind, unique claims to glory may suffice! *He was the first Traveller to trace a route across the whole longitude of ASIA, naming and describing kingdom after kingdom which he had seen with his own eyes; the Deserts of PERSIA, the flowering plateaux and wild gorges of BADAKHSHAN, the jade-bearing rivers of KHOTAN, the MONGOLIAN Steppes, cradle of the power that had so lately threatened to swallow up Christendom, the new and brilliant Court that had been established at CAMBALUC? The first Traveller to reveal CHINA in all its wealth and vastness, its mighty rivers, its huge cities, its rich manufactures, its swarming population, the inconceivably vast fleets that quickened its seas and its inland waters; to tell us of the nations on its borders with all their eccentricities of manners and worship, of TIBET with its sordid devotees, of BURMA with its golden pagodas and their tinkling crowns, of LAOS, of SIAM, of COCHIN CHINA, of JAPAN, the Eastern Thule, with its rosy pearls and golden-roofed palaces; the first to speak of that Museum of Beauty and Wonder, still so imperfectly ransacked, the INDIAN ARCHIPELAGO, source of those aromatics then so highly prized and whose origin was so dark; of JAVA the Pearl of Islands; of SUMATRA with its many kings, its strange costly products, and its cannibal races; of the naked savages of NICOBAR and ANDAMAN; of CEYLON the Isle of Gems with its Sacred Mountain and its Tomb of Adam; of INDIA THE GREAT, not as a dream-land of Alexandrian fables but as a country seen and partially explored, with its virtuous Brahmans, its obscene ascetics, its diamonds and the*

His true  
claims to  
glory.

told such great things; his desire was to reach China by sailing westward, and in his way he fell in with America" (*H. des Sciences Mathém. &c.* II. 150).

The fact seems to be that Columbus knew of Polo's revelations only at second hand, from the letters of the Florentine Toscanelli and the like; and I cannot find that he *ever* refers to Polo by name. Though to the day of his death he was full of imaginations about Zipangu and the land of the Great Kaan as being in immediate proximity to his discoveries, these were but accidents of his great theory. It was the intense conviction he had acquired of the absolute smallness of the Earth, of the vast extension of Asia eastward, and of the consequent narrowness of the Western Ocean on which his life's project was based. This conviction he seems to have derived chiefly from the works of the Cardinal Pierre d'Ailly. But the latter borrowed his collected arguments from Roger Bacon, who has stated them, erroneous as they are, very forcibly in his *Opus Majus* (p. 137), as Humboldt has noticed in his *Examen* (vol. i. p. 64). The Spanish historian Mariana makes a strange jumble of the alleged guides of Columbus, saying that some ascribed his convictions to "the information given by one Marco Polo, a Florentine physician!" (Quoted in Markham's *Garcilasso de la Vega*, p. 26.)

*strange tales of their acquisition, its sea-beds of pearl, and its powerful sun ; the first in medieval times\* to give any distinct account of the secluded Christian Empire of ABYSSINIA, and the semi-Christian Island of SOCOTRA ; to speak, though indeed dimly, of ZANGIBAR with its negroes and its ivory, and of the vast and distant MADAGASCAR, bordering on the Dark Ocean of the South, with its Ruc and other monstrosities ; and, in a remotely opposite region, of SIBERIA and the ARCTIC OCEAN, of dog-sledges, white bears, and reindeer-riding Tunguses.*

That all this rich catalogue of discoveries should belong to the revelations of one Man and one Book is surely ample enough to account for and to justify the Author's high place in the roll of Fame, and there can be no need to exaggerate his greatness, or to invest him with imaginary attributes.\*

68. What manner of man was Ser Marco ? It is a question hard to answer. Some critics cry out against personal detail

His personal  
attributes  
seen but  
dimly.

in books of Travel ; but as regards him who would not welcome a little more egotism ! In his Book impersonality is carried to excess ; and we are often driven to discern by indirect and doubtful indications alone, whether he is speaking of a place from personal knowledge or only from hearsay. In truth, though there are delightful exceptions, and nearly every part of the book suggests interesting questions, a desperate meagreness and baldness does extend over considerable tracts of the story. In fact his book reminds us sometimes of his own description of Khorasan :—  
*" On chevauche par beaux plains et belles costières, là où il a moult beaux herbages et bonne pasture et fruits assez . . . . et aucune fois y treuve l'en un desert de soixante milles ou de mains, esquel desers ne treuve l'en point d'eaue : mais la convient porter o lui ! "*

Still, some shadowy image of the man may be seen in the Book ; a practical man, brave, shrewd, prudent, keen in affairs, and never losing his interest in mercantile details, very fond of the chase, sparing of speech ; with a deep wondering respect for Saints, even though they be Pagan Saints, and their asceticism, but a contempt for Pafarins and such like, whose consciences would not run in customary grooves, and on his own part a keen appreciation of the World's pomps and vanities. See, on the

\* " C'est diminuer l'expression d'un éloge que de l'exagérer " (*Humboldt, Examen*, III. 13).

one hand, his undisguised admiration of the hard life and long fastings of Sakya Muni; and on the other how enthusiastic he gets in speaking of the great Kaan's command of the good things of the world, but above all of his matchless opportunities of sport!\*

Of humour there are hardly any signs in his Book. His almost solitary joke (I know but one more, and it pertains to the *οὐκ ἀνήκουστα*) occurs in speaking of the Kaan's paper-money, when he observes that Kublai might be said to have the true Philosopher's Stone, for he made his money at pleasure out of the bark of Trees.† Even the oddest eccentricities of outlandish tribes scarcely seem to disturb his gravity; as when he relates in his brief way of the people called Gold-Teeth on the frontier of Burma, that ludicrous custom which Mr. Tylor has so well illustrated under the name of the *Courade*. There is more savour of laughter in the few lines of a Greek Epic, which relate precisely the same custom of a people on the Euxine:—

———— “ In the Tiharenian Land  
When some good woman bears her lord a babe,  
Tis *he* is swathed and groaning put to bed :  
Whilst *she*, arising, tends his bath, and serves  
Nice possets for her husband in the straw.” ‡

69. Of scientific notions, such as we find in the unvarnished Maundevile, we have no trace in truthful Marco. The former, “lying with a circumstance,” tell us boldly that he was in 33° of South Latitude; the latter is Absence of  
scientific  
notions. full of wonder that some of the Indian Islands where he had been lay so far to the south that you lost sight of the Pole Star. When it rises again on his horizon he estimates the Latitude by the Pole-star's being so many *cubits* high. So the gallant Baber speaks of the sun having mounted *spear-high* when the onset of battle began at Paniput. Such expressions convey no notion at all to such as have had their ideas sophisticated by angular perceptions of altitude, but similar expressions are common among Orientals, and indeed I have heard them from educated Englishmen. In another place Marco states regarding certain islands in the Northern

\* See vol. ii. p. 258, and vol. i. p. 359.

† Vol. i. p. 378.

‡ Vol. ii. p. 52, and *Apollonius Rhodius, Argonaut.* II. 1012.



Ocean that they lie so very far to the north that in going thither one actually leaves the Pole-star a trifle behind towards the south; a statement to which we know only one parallel, to wit in the voyage of that adventurous Dutch skipper who told Master Moxon, King Charles II.'s Hydrographer, that he had sailed two degrees beyond the Pole!

70. The Book, however, is full of bearings and distances, and I have thought it worth while to construct a map from its indications, in order to get some approximation to Polo's own idea of the face of that world which he had traversed so extensively. There are three allusions to maps in the course of his work.\*

Map constructed on Polo's data.

In his own bearings, at least on land journeys, he usually carries us along a great general traverse line, without much caring about small changes of direction. Thus on the great outward journey from the frontier of Persia to that of China, the line runs almost continuously "*entre Levant et Grec*" or E.N.E. In his journey from Cambaluc or Peking to Mien or Burma, it is always *Ponent* or W.; and in that from Peking to Zayton in Fokien, the port of embarkation for India, it is *Sceloc* or S.E. The line of bearings in which he deviates most widely from truth is that of the cities on the Arabian Coast from Aden to Hormuz, which he makes to run steadily *vers Maistre* or N.W., a conception which it has not been very easy to realize on the map.†

\* See vol. ii. pp. 192, 253, and 356.

† The map, perhaps, gives too favourable an idea of Marco's geographical conceptions. For in such a construction much has to be supplied for which there are no data, and that is apt to take mould from modern knowledge. Just as in the book-illustrations of sixty years ago we find that Princesses of Abyssinia, damsels of Otaheite, and Beauties of Mary Stuart's Court have all somehow a savour of the high waists, low foreheads, and tight garments of 1810.

We are told that Prince Pedro of Portugal in 1426 received from the Signory of Venice a map which was supposed to be either an original or a copy of one by Marco Polo's own hand (*Major's P. Henry*, p. 62). There is no evidence to justify any absolute expression of disbelief; and if any map-maker with the spirit of the author of the *Carta Catalana* then dwelt in Venice, Polo certainly could not have gone to his grave uncatechized. But I should suspect the map to have been a copy of the old one that existed in the Sala dello Scudo of the Ducal Palace.

The maps now to be seen painted on the walls of that Hall, and on which Polo's route is marked, are not of any great interest. But in the middle of the fifteenth century there was an old *Descriptio Orbis sine Maggionibus* in the Hall, and when the apartment was renewed in 1459 a decree of the Senate ordered that a map should be repainted on the new walls. This map perished by a fire in 1630. On the motion of Ramusio, in the next century, four new maps were

71. In the early part of the Book we are told that Marco acquired several of the languages current in the Mongol Empire, and no less than four written characters. We have discussed what these are likely to have been (I. p. 27), and have given a decided opinion that Chinese was not one of them. Besides intrinsic improbability, and positive indications of Marco's ignorance of Chinese, in no respect is his book so defective as in regard to Chinese manners and peculiarities. The use of Tea, though he travelled through the Tea districts of Fokien, is never mentioned; the compressed feet of the women and the employment of the fishing cormorant, both mentioned by Friar Odoric, the contemporary of his later years, artificial egg-hatching, printing of books (though the notice of this art seems positively challenged in his account of paper-money), besides a score of remarkable arts and customs which one would have expected to recur to his memory, are never alluded to. Neither does he speak of the great characteristic of the Chinese writing. It is difficult to account for these omissions, especially considering the comparative fullness with which he treats the manners of the Tartars and of the Southern Hindoos; but the impression remains that his associations in China were chiefly with foreigners. Wherever the place he speaks of had a Tartar or Persian name he uses that rather than the Chinese one. Thus *Cathay*, *Cambaluc*, *Pulisanghin*, *Tangut*, *Chagannur*, *Saianfu*, *Kenjanfu*, *Tenduc*, *Acbalet*, *Carajan*, *Zardandan*, *Zayton*, *Kemenfu*, *Brius*, *Caramoran*, *Chorchu*, *Fuju*, are all Mongol, Turki, or Persian forms, though all have Chinese equivalents.\*

Singular omissions of Polo in regard to China; Historical inaccuracies.

In reference to the then recent history of Asia, Marco is

Foscarini caused them to be renewed by the painter Francesco Grisellini. He professed to have adhered closely to the old maps, but he certainly did not, as Morelli testifies. Eastern Asia looks as if based on a work of Ramusio's age; but Western Asia is of undoubtedly modern character (see *Operetti di Jacopo Morelli*, Ven. 1820, I. 299).

\* It is probable that Persian, which had long been the language of Turanian courts, was also the common tongue of foreigners at that of the Mongols. *Pulisanghin* and *Zardandan*, in the preceding list, are pure Persian: So are several of the Oriental phrases noted at p. cix. See also notes on *Ondanique* and *Pernique* at pp. 87 and 340 of this volume, on *Tarwin* at p. 400, and a note at p. clix. *supra*. The narratives of Odoric and others of the early travellers to Cathay afford corroborative examples. Lord Stanley of Alderley, in one of his contributions to the Hakluyt Society, has given evidence from antiquaries that Chinese Mahomedans still preserve the knowledge of numerous Persian words.

often inaccurate, *e. g.*, in his account of the death of Chinghiz, in the list of his successors, and in his statement of the relationship between notable members of that House. But the most perplexing knot in the whole book lies in the interesting account which he gives of the Siege of Sayanfu or Siangyang, during the subjugation of Southern China by Kublai. I have entered on this matter in the notes (vol. ii. p. 129<sup>f</sup>), and will only say here that M. Pauthier's solution of the difficulty is no solution, being absolutely inconsistent with the story as told by Marco himself, and that I see none; though I have so much faith in Marco's veracity that I am loath to believe that the facts admit of no reconciliation.

Our faint attempt to appreciate some of Marco's qualities, as gathered from his work, will seem far below the very high estimates that have been pronounced, not only by some who have delighted rather to enlarge upon his fame than to make themselves acquainted with his work,\* but also by persons whose studies and opinions have been worthy of all respect. Our estimate, however, does not abate a jot of our intense interest in his Book and affection for his memory. And we have a strong feeling that, owing partly to his reticence, and partly to the great disadvantages under which the Book was committed to writing, we have in it a singularly imperfect image of the Man.

72. A question naturally suggests itself, how far Polo's narrative, at least in its expression, was modified by passing under the pen of a professed litterateur of somewhat humble claims, such as Rusticiano was. The case is not a singular one, and in our own day the ill-judged use of such assistance has been fatal to the reputation of an adventurous Traveller.

We have, however, already expressed our own view that in the Geographic Text we have the nearest possible approach

\* An example is seen in the voluminous *Annali Musulmani* of G. B. Rampoldi, Milan, 1825. This writer speaks of the Travels of Marco Polo with his brother and uncle; declares that he visited *Tipango* (*sic*), Java, Ceylon, and the *Maldives*, collected all the geographical notions of his age, traversed the two peninsulas of the Indies, examined the islands of *Socotra*, *Madagascar*, *Sofala*, and traversed with *philosophic eye* the regions of Zanguehar, Abyssinia, Nubia, and Egypt! and so forth (ix. 174). And whilst Malte-Brun bestows on Marco the sounding and ridiculous title of "*the Humboldt of the 13th century*," he shows no real acquaintance with his Book (see his *Précis*, ed. of 1836, l. 551 *seqq.*).

Was Polo's  
Book materi-  
ally af-  
fected by  
the Scribe  
Rusticiano?

to a photographic impression of Marco's oral narrative. If there be an exception to this we should seek it in the descriptions of battles, in which we find the narrator to fall constantly into a certain vein of bombastic commonplaces, which look like the stock phrases of a professed romancer, and which indeed have a strong resemblance to the actual phraseology of certain metrical romances.\* Whether this feature be due to Rusticiano I cannot say, but I have not been able to trace anything of the same character in a cursory inspection of some of his romance-compilations. Still one finds it impossible to conceive of our sober and reticent Messer Marco pacing the floor of his Genoese dungeon, and seven times over rolling out this magniloquent bombast, with sufficient deliberation to be overtaken by the pen of the faithful amanuensis!

73. On the other hand, though Marco, who had left home at fifteen years of age, naturally shows very few signs of reading, there are indications that he had read romances, especially those dealing with the fabulous adventures of Alexander.

Marco's  
reading em-  
braced the  
Alexandrian  
Romances.  
Examples.

To these he refers explicitly or tacitly in his notices of the Irongate and of Gog and Magog, in his allusions to the marriage of Alexander with Darius's daughter, and to the battle between those two heroes, and in his repeated mention of the *Arbre Sal* or *Arbre Sec* on the Khorasan frontier.

The key to these allusions is to be found in that Legendary History of Alexander, entirely distinct from the true history of the Macedonian Conqueror, which in great measure took the place of the latter in the imagination of East and West for a thousand years. This fabulous history is believed to be of Græco-Egyptian origin, and in its earliest extant compiled form, in the Greek of the Pseudo-Callisthenes, can be traced back to at least about A.D. 200. From the Greek its marvels spread eastward at an early date; some part at least of their matter was known to Moses of Chorene, in the 5th century; they were translated into Armenian, Arabic, Hebrew, and Syriac; and were reproduced in the verses of

\* See for example vol. i. pp. 301, 302, and note 4 at p. 305; also vol. ii. p. 67. The descriptions in the style referred to recur in all seven times; but most of them (which are in Book IV.) have been omitted in this edition.

Firdusi and various other Persian Poets ; spreading eventually even to the Indian Archipelago, and finding utterance in Malay and Siamese. At an early date they had been rendered into Latin by Julius Valerius ; but this work had probably been lost sight of, and it was in the tenth century that they were re-imported from Byzantium to Italy by the Archpriest Leo, who had gone as Envoy to the Eastern Capital from John Duke of Campania.\* Romantic histories on this foundation, in verse and prose, became diffused in all the languages of Western Europe, from Spain to Scandinavia, rivalling in popularity the romantic cycles of the Round Table or of Charlemagne. Nor did this popularity cease till the 16th century was well advanced.

The heads of most of the Medieval Travellers were crammed with these fables as genuine history.† And by the help of that community of legend on this subject which they found wherever Mahomedan literature had spread, Alexander Magnus was to be traced everywhere in Asia. Friar Odoric found Tana, near Bombay, to be the veritable City of King Porus ; John Marignolli's vain glory led him to imitate King Alexander in setting up a marble column "in the corner of the world over against Paradise," *i. e.*, somewhere on the coast of Travancore ; whilst Sir John Maundevile, with a cheaper ambition, borrowed wonders from the Travels of Alexander to adorn his own.

Prominent in all these stories is the tale of Alexander's shutting up a score of impure nations, at the head of which were Gog and Magog, within a barrier of impassable mountains, there to await the latter days, a legend with which the disturbed mind of Europe not unnaturally connected that cataclysm of unheard-of Pagans that seemed about to deluge Christendom in the first half of the thirteenth century. In these stories also the beautiful Roxana, who becomes the bride of Alexander, is *Darius's* daughter, bequeathed to his arms by the dying monarch. Conspicuous among them again is the Legend of the Oracular Trees of the Sun and Moon,

\* Zacher, *Forschungen zur Critik, &c., der Alexandersage*, Halle, 1867, p. 108.

† Even so sagacious a man as Roger Bacon quotes the fabulous letter of Alexander to Aristotle as authentic (*Opus Majus*, p. 137).

which with audible voice foretold the place and manner of Alexander's death. With this Alexandrian legend some of the later forms of the story had mixed up one of Christian origin about the Dry Tree, *L'Arbre Sec*. And they had also adopted the Oriental story of the Land of Darkness and the mode of escape from it, which Polo relates at p. 416 of vol. ii.

74. We have seen in the most probable interpretation of the nickname *Milioni* that Polo's popular reputation in his lifetime was of a questionable kind; and a contemporary chronicler, already quoted, has told us how on his death-bed the Traveller was begged by anxious friends to retract his extraordinary stories.\* A little later one who copied the Book "*per passare tempo e malinconia*" says frankly that he puts no faith in it.† Sir Thomas Brown is content "to carry a wary eye" in reading "Paulus Venetus;" but others of our countrymen in the last century express strong doubts whether he ever was in Tartary or China.‡ Marsden's edition might well have extinguished the last sparks of scepticism. Hammer meant praise in calling Polo "*der Vater orientalischer Hologetik*," in spite of the uncouthness of the eulogy. But another grave German writer, ten years after Marsden's publication, put forth in a serious book that the whole story was a clumsy imposture!§

Injustice  
long done to  
Polo. Sin-  
gular modern  
instance.

\* See passage from Jacopo d'Acqui, *supra*, p. lxxxi.

† It is the transcriber of one of the Florence MSS. who appends this terminal note:—"Here ends the Book of Messer M. P. of Venice, written with mine own hand by me Amalio Bonagnisi when Podestà of Cierreto Guidi, to get rid of time and *ennui*. The contents seem to me incredible things, not lies so much as miracles; and it may be all very true what he says, but I don't believe it; though to be sure throughout the world very different things are found in different countries. But these things, it has seemed to me in copying, are entertaining enough, but not things to believe or put any faith in; that at least is my opinion. And I finished copying this at Cierreto aforesaid, 12th November, A.D. 1392."

‡ *Vulgar Errors*, Bk. I. ch. viii.; *Astley's Voyages*, IV. 583.

§ See *Städtewesen des Mittelalters*, by K. D. Hullmann, Bonn, 1829, vol. iv. After speaking of the Missions of Pope Innocent IV. and St. Lewis, this author sketches the Travels of the Polos, and then proceeds:—"Such are the clumsily compiled contents of this ecclesiastical fiction disguised as a Book of Travels, a thing devised generally in the spirit of the age, but specially in the interests of the Clergy and of Trade. . . . This compiler's aim was analogous to that of the inventor of the Song of Roland, to kindle enthusiasm for the conversion of the Mongols, and so to facilitate commerce through their dominions. . . . Assuredly the Poli never got further than Great Bucharia, which was then reached by many Italian Travellers. What they have related of the regions of the Mongol Empire lying further east consists merely of recollections of the bazaar and travel-talk of traders from those countries; whilst the notices of India, Persia, Arabia,

## XII. CONTEMPORARY RECOGNITION OF POLO AND HIS BOOK.

75. But we must return for a little to Polo's own times. Ramusio states, as we have seen, that immediately after the first commission of Polo's narrative to writing, (in Latin as he imagined), many copies of it were made, How far was there diffusion of his Book in his own day? it was translated into the vulgar tongue, and in a few months all Italy was full of it.

The few facts that we can collect seem scarcely to justify this view of the rapid and diffused renown of the Traveller and his Book. The number of MSS. of the latter dating from the 14th century is no doubt considerable, but a large proportion of these are of Pipino's condensed Latin Translation, which was not put forth, if we can trust Ramusio, till 1320, and certainly not much earlier. The whole number of MSS. in various languages that we have been able to register, amounts to about seventy-five. I find it difficult to obtain statistical data as to the comparative number of copies of different works existing in manuscript. With Dante's great Poem, of which there are reckoned close upon 500 MSS.,\* comparison would be inappropriate. But of the Travels of Friar Odoric, a poor work indeed beside Marco Polo's, I reckoned thirty-nine MSS., and could now add at least three more to the list. Also I find that of the nearly contemporary work of Brunetto Latini, the *Tresor*, a sort of condensed Encyclopædia of knowledge, but a work which one would scarcely have expected to approach the popularity of Polo's Book, the Editor enumerates some fifty MSS. And from the great frequency with which one encounters in Catalogues both MSS. and early printed editions of Sir John Maundevile, I should suppose that the lying wonders of our English Knight had a far greater popularity and more extensive diffusion than the veracious and more sober marvels of Polo.† To Southern Italy Polo's popularity

and Ethiopia, are borrowed from Arabic Works. The compiler no doubt carries his audacity in fiction a long way, when he makes his hero Marcus assert that he had been seventeen years in Kublai's service," &c., &c. (pp. 360-362).

\* See *Ferrazzi, Manuele Dantesca*, Bassano, 1865, p. 729.

† In Quaritch's last catalogue (Nov. 1870) there is only one *old* edition of Polo; there are *nine* of Maundevile. In 1839 there were nineteen MSS. of the latter author catalogued in the British Museum Library. There are *now* only five of *Marco Polo*. At least twenty-five editions of Maundevile and only five of Polo were printed in the 15th century.

certainly does not seem at any time to have extended. I cannot learn that any MS. of his Book exists in any Library of Naples or Sicily.\*

Dante, who lived for twenty-three years after Marco's work was written, and who touches so many things in the seen and unseen Worlds, never alludes to Polo, nor I think to anything that can be connected with his Book. I believe that no mention of *Cathay* occurs in the *Divina Commedia*. That distant region is indeed mentioned more than once in the poems of a humbler contemporary, Francesco da Barberino, but there is nothing in his allusions besides this name to suggest any knowledge of Polo's work.†

Neither can I discover any trace of Polo or his work in that of his contemporary and countryman, Marino Sanuto the Elder, though this worthy is well acquainted with the somewhat later work of Hayton, and many of the subjects which

\* I have made personal inquiry at the National Libraries of Naples and Palermo, at the Communal Library in the latter city, and at the Benedictine Libraries of Monte Cassino, Monreale, S. Martino, and Catania.

In the fifteenth century, when Polo's Book had become more generally diffused, we find three copies of it in the Catalogue of the Library of Charles VI. of France, made at the Louvre in 1423, by order of the Duke of Bedford.

The estimates of value are curious. They are in *sole parisi*, of which ten, or half a livre, may be reckoned equal to 9s. 2d.:-

“No. 295. *Item* Marcus Paulus; en ung cahier escript de lettre formée en françois a deux coulombes. Commt. au ii. fo. ‘deux frères prescheurs,’ et ou derrenier ‘que sa arrières.’ No. p. . . .

“No. 334. *Item* Marcus Paulus. Couvert de drap d’or, bien escript et enluminé de lettre de forme françois, a deux coulombes. Commt. ou ii. fol. ‘il fut Roys,’ et ou derrenier ‘propremen.’ A deux fermours de laton. XV<sup>s</sup>. p. . . .

“No. 336. *Item* Marcus Paulus, non enluminé escript en françois de lettre de forme. Commt. ou ii. fo. ‘vocata moult grant’ et ou derrenier ‘ilec dist il.’ Couvert de cuir blanc. A deux fermours de laton. XII<sup>s</sup>. p. . . .

(*Inventaire de la Bibl., &c., Paris, 1867.*)

† See *Del Regimento e de' Costumi delle Donne*, di Messer Francesco da Barberino, Roma, 1815, pp. 166 and 271.

This author was born the year before Dante (1264), and though he lived to 1348 it is probable that the poems in question were written in his earlier years. *Cathay* was no doubt known by dim repute long before the final return of the Polos, both through the original journey of Nicolo and Maffeo, and by information gathered by the Missionary Friars. Indeed, in 1278 Pope Nicolas III., in consequence of information said to have come from Abaka Khan of Persia, that Kublai was a baptized Christian, sent a party of Franciscans with a long letter to the Kaan Quobley, as he is termed. They never seem to have reached their destination. And in 1289 Nicolas IV. intrusted a similar mission to Friar John of Monte Corvino, which eventually led to very tangible results. Neither of the Papal letters, however, mention *Cathay* (see *Mosheim*, App. pp. 76 and 94).



he touches in his own book would seem to challenge a reference to Marco's labours.

76. Of contemporary or nearly contemporary references to our Traveller by name, the following are all that I can produce, and none of them are new.

Contemporary references to Polo.

First there is the notice regarding his presentation of his book to Thibault de Cepoy, of which we need say no more (*supra*, p. xcvi).

Next there is the Preface to Friar Pipino's Translation, which we give at length in the Appendix (E) to these notices. The phraseology of this appears to imply that Marco was still alive, and this agrees with the date assigned to the work by Ramusio. Pipino was also the author of a Chronicle, of which a part was printed by Muratori, and this contains chapters on the Tartar wars, the destruction of the Old Man of the Mountain, &c., derived from Polo. A passage not printed by Muratori has been extracted by Prof. Bianconi from a MS. of this Chronicle in the Modena Library, and runs as follows:—

“The matters which follow, concerning the magnificence of the Tartar Emperors, whom in their language they call *Cham* as we have said, are related by Marcus Paulus the Venetian in a certain Book of his which has been translated by me into Latin out of the Lombardic Vernacular. Having gained the notice of the Emperor himself and become attached to his service, he passed nearly 27 years in the Tartar countries.”\*

Again we have that mention of Marco by Friar Jacopo d'Acqui, which we have quoted in connection with his capture by the Genöese, at p. lxxxii. And the Florentine historian GIOVANNI VILLANI,† when alluding to the Tartars, says:—

“Let him who would make full acquaintance with their history examine the book of Friar Hayton, Lord of Colcos in Armenia, which he made at the instance of Pope Clement V., and also the Book called *Milione* which was made by Messer Marco Polo of Venice, who tells much about their power and dominion, having spent a long time among them. And so let us quit the Tartars and return to our subject, the History of Florence.”‡

\* See Muratori, IX. 583, *seqq.*; Bianconi, Mem. I. p. 37.

† G. Villani died in the great plague of 1348. But his book was begun soon after Marco's was written, for he states that it was the sight of the memorials of greatness which he witnessed at Rome, during the Jubilee of 1300, that put it into his head to write the history of the rising glories of Florence, and that he began the work after his return home (Bk. VIII. ch. 36). ‡ Book V. ch. 29.

77. Lastly, we learn from a curious passage in a medical work by PIETRO OF ABANO, a celebrated physician and philosopher, and a man of Polo's own generation, that he was personally acquainted with the Traveller. In a discussion on the old notion of the non-habitability of the Equatorial regions, which Pietro controverts, he says :\*

Further contemporary references.

"In the country of the ZINGI there is seen a star as big as a sack. I know a man who has seen it, and he told me it had a faint light like a piece of a cloud, and is always in the south.† I have been told of this and other matters by MARCO the Venetian, the most extensive traveller and the most diligent inquirer whom I have ever known. He saw this same star under the Antarctic ; he described it as having a great tail, and drew a figure of it *thus*. He also told me that he saw the Antarctic Pole at an altitude above the earth apparently equal to the length of a soldier's lance, whilst the Arctic Pole was as much below the horizon. 'Tis from that place, he says, that they export to us camphor, lign-aloes, and brazil. He says the heat there is intense, and the habitations few. And these things he witnessed in a certain Island at which he arrived by Sea. He tells me also that there are (wild?) men there, and also certain very great rams that have very coarse and stiff wool just like the bristles of ear pigs."‡



Star at the Antarctic as sketched by Marco Polo

\* *Petri Apenensis Medici ac Philosophi Celeberrimi, Consulatori*, Venice, 1521, fol. 97. Peter was born in 1250 at Abano, near Padua, and was Professor of Medicine at the University in the latter city. He twice fell into the claws of the Unholy Office, and only escaped them by death in 1316.

† The great Magellanic cloud? In the account of Vincent Yanez Pinzon's Voyage to the S.W. in 1499 as given in Ramusio (III. 15) after Pietro Martire d'Anghieria, it is said :—"Taking the astrolabe in hand, and ascertaining the Antarctic Pole, they did not see any star like our Pole Star ; but they related that they saw another manner of stars very different from ours, and which they could not clearly discern because of a certain dimness which diffused itself about those stars, and obstructed the view of them."

The great Magellan cloud is mentioned by an old Arab writer as a white blotch at the foot of Canopus, visible in the Tehama along the Red Sea, but not in Nejd or 'Irák. Humboldt, in quoting this, calculates that in A.D. 1000 the Great Magellan would have been visible at Aden some degrees above the horizon (*Examen*, V. 235).

‡ This passage contains points that are omitted in Polo's book, besides the drawing implied to be from Marco's own hand ! The Island is of course Sumatra. The animal is perhaps the peculiar Sumatran wild-goat, figured by Marsden, the hair of which on the back is "coarse and strong, almost like bristles" (*Sumatra*, p. 115).

In addition to these five I know no other contemporary references to Polo, nor indeed any other within the 14th century, though such there must surely be, excepting in a Chronicle written after the middle of that century by JOHN of YPRES, Abbot of St. Bertin, otherwise known as Friar John the Long, and himself a person of very high merit in the history of Travel, as a precursor of the Ramusios, Hakluyts and Purchases, for he collected together and translated (when needful) into French all of the most valuable works of Eastern Travel and Geography produced in the age immediately preceding his own.\* In his Chronicle the Abbot speaks at some length of the adventures of the Polo Family, concluding with a passage to which we have already had occasion to refer:

“And so Messers Nicolaus and Maffeus, with certain Tartars were sent a second time to these parts; but Marcus Pauli was retained by the Emperor and employed in his military service, abiding with him for a space of 27 years. And the Cham, on account of his ability despatched him upon affairs of his to various parts of Tartary and India and the Islands, on which journeys he beheld many of the marvels of those regions. And concerning these he afterwards composed a book in the French vernacular, which said Book of Marvels, with others of the same kind, we do possess.” (*Thesaur. Nov. Anecdotes* III. 747.)

78. There is, however, a notable work which is ascribed to a rather early date in the 14th century, and which, though it contains no reference to Polo by name, shows a thorough

\* A splendid example of Abbot John's Collection is the *Livre des Merveilles* of the Great French Library (No. 15 in our Appendix F). This contains Polo, Odoric, William of Boldensel, the Book of the Estate of the Great Kaan by the Archbishop of Soltania, Maundevile, Hayton, and Ricold of Montecroce, of which all but Polo and Maundevile are French versions by this excellent Long John.

It is a question for which there is sufficient ground, whether the Persian Historians Rashiduddin and Wassaf, one or other or both, did not derive certain information that appears in their histories, from Marco Polo personally, he having spent many months in Persia, and at the Court of Tabriz, when either or both may have been there. Such passages as that about the Cotton-trees of Guzerat (vol. ii. p. 328, and, note), those about the horse-trade with Maabar (ib. p. 276, and, note), about the brother-kings of that country (ib. p. 267), about the naked savages of Necuveram (ib. pp. 248, 250), about the wild people of Sumatra calling themselves subjects of the Great Kaan (ib. pp. 227, 235, 236, 241, 242), have so strong a resemblance to parallel passages in one or both of the above historians, as given in the first and third volumes of Elliot, that the probability, at least, of the Persian writers having derived their information from Polo, might be fairly maintained.

acquaintance with his book, and borrows themes largely from it. This is the poetical Romance of Bauduin de Sebourg, an exceedingly clever and vivacious production, partaking largely of that bantering, half-mocking spirit which is, I believe, characteristic of many of the later medieval French Romances.\* Bauduin is a knight who, after a very wild and loose youth, goes through an extraordinary series of adventures, displaying great faith and courage, and eventually becomes King of Jerusalem. I will cite some of the traits evidently derived from our Traveller, which I have met with in a short examination of this curious work.

Curious borrowings from Polo in the Romance of Bauduin de Sebourg.

Bauduin, embarked on a diomond in the Indian Sea, is wrecked in the territory of Baudas, and near a city called Falise, which stands on the River of Baudas. The people of this city were an unbelieving race.

" Il ne croient Dieu, ne Mahon, ne Tervogant,  
Ydole, cruchéus, diable, ne trant "

Their only belief was this, that when a man died a great fire should be made beside his tomb, in which should be burned all his clothes, arms, and necessary furniture, whilst his horse and servant should be put to death, and then the dead man would have the benefit of all these useful properties in the other world.† Moreover, if it was the king that died—

" Se li Rois de la terre i aloit trespassant "

\* \* \* \* \*  
Si faisoit on tuer vin. jour en un tenant,  
Tout chiaus c'on encontroit par le chité passant  
Pour tenir compaignie leur Signor soffisant ;  
Telle estoit le creanche au pais dont je cant ! " †

Bauduin arrives when the king has been dead three days, and through dread of this custom all the people of the city are

\* *Li Romans de Bauduin de Sebourg, III. Roy de Jherusalem* : Poème du XIV<sup>e</sup> Siècle ; Valenciennes, 1841. 2 vols. I was indebted to two references of M. Pauthier's for knowledge of the existence of this work. He cites the legends of the Mountain, and of the Stone of the Saracens from an abstract, but does not seem to have consulted the work itself, nor to have been aware of the extent of its borrowings from Marco Polo. M. Génin, from whose account Pauthier quotes, ascribes the poem to an early date after the death of Philip the Fair (1314). See *Pauthier*, pp. 57, 58, and 140.

† See Polo. vol. i. p. 185, and vol. ii. p. 151.

‡ See Polo, vol. i. p. 217.

shut up in their houses. He enters an inn, and helps himself to a vast repast, having been fasting for three days. He is then seized and carried before the king, Polibans by name. We might have quoted this prince at p. ciii, as an instance of the diffusion of the French tongue :

“ Polibans sot Fransois, car on le doctrina ;  
j. renoies de Franche vij. ans i demora  
“ Qui li aprist Fransois, si que bel en parla.”

Bauduin exclaims against their barbarous belief, and declares the Christian doctrine to the king, who acknowledges good points in it, but concludes :

“ Vassaus, dist Polibans, à la chière hardie,  
Jà ne crerrai vou Dieux, à nuît jour de ma vie,  
Ne vostre Loy ne vaut une pomme pourie !”

Bauduin proposes to prove his Faith by fighting the prince, himself unarmed, the latter with all his arms. The prince agrees, but is rather dismayed at Bauduin's confidence, and desires his followers, in case of his own death, to burn with him horses, armour, &c., asking at the same time which of them would consent to burn along with him, in order to be his companions in the other world :

“ La en ot ii-c. dont chascuns s'écria :  
Nous morons volentiers, quant vo corps mort sara !” \*

Bauduin's prayer for help is miraculously granted ; Polibans is beaten, and converted by a vision. He tells Bauduin that in his neighbourhood, beyond Baudas—

“ ou v. liewes ou vi.  
Che un felles prinches, orgocilleus et despis,  
De la Rouge Montaingne est Prinches et Marchis.  
Or vous dirai comment il a ses gens nouris.  
Je vous dis que chius Roys a fait un Paradis  
Tant noble et gratieus, et plains de tels delis  
\* \* \* \* \*  
Car en che Paradis est un riex establis  
Qui se partist en trois, en che noble pourpris ;  
En l'un coert li clarés, d'espises bien garnis ;  
Et en l'autre li miés, qui les a ressouffis ;  
Et li vins di picument i quecant par droit avis—

\* See Polo, vol. ii. p. 276.

Il n' i vente ne gèle. Che liés est de samis  
 De riches dras de soie, bien ouvrés a devis.  
 Et aveukes tout che que je chi vous devis,  
 I a ij-c. puchelles qui moult ont cler le vis  
 Carolans et tresquans, menans gales et ris ;  
 Et si est li Dieuesse, dame et suppellatis,  
 Qui doctrine les autres et en fais et en dis ;  
 Celle est la fille au Roy c' on dist des *Haus Assis*," \*

This Lady Ivorine, the Old Man's daughter, is described among other points as having—

" Les iex vairs com farcons, nobles et agents." †

The King of the Mountain collects all the young male children of the country, and has them brought up for nine or ten years :

" Dedens un lieu obscur : Là les met-on toudis  
 Aveukes males bestes, kiens et cas et soris  
 Culoères et lisaerdes, escorpions petis.  
 La endroit ne peut nuls avoir joie ne ris."

And after this dreary life they are shown the Paradise, and told that such shall be their portion if they do their Lord's behests :

" S'il disoit à son homme : " Va ten droit à Paris !  
 Si me fier d'un coutel le Roy de Saint Denis "  
 Jamais n'aresteroit, né par nuit né par dis.  
 S'aroit tué le Roy, voiant tous ches marchis,  
 Et deüst estre à fources trainés et mal mis."

Bauduin determines to see this Paradise and the lovely Ivorine. The road led by Baudas :

" Or avoit a che tamps se l'histoire ne ment  
 En le chit de Baudas Kristiens, jusqu'à cent.  
 Qui manoient illoec par tréu d'argent  
 Que cascuns cristiens au Roy-Calife rent.  
 Li pères du Calife, qui regna longement,  
 Ama les Crestiens, et Dieu premièrement :  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
 Et lor fist establir j. monstier noble et gent;  
 Ou Crestien faisoient faire lor sacrement.  
 Une moult noble pierre lor donna proprement  
 Ou on avoit posé Mahon moult longement.‡

\* See Polo, vol. i. p. 132. *Hashishi* has got altered into *Haus Assis*.

† See vol. i. p. 319, n. 1e.

‡ See vol. i. p. 174, note 1.

The story is, in fact, that which Marco relates of Samar-kand.\* The Caliph dies. His son hates the Christians. His people complain of the toleration of the Christians and their minister; but he says his father had pledged him not to interfere, and he dared not forswear himself. If, without doing so, he could do them an ill turn, he would gladly. The people then suggest their claim to the stone :

“ Or leur donna vos pères, dont che fu mesprisons.  
Ceste piërrre, biaux Sire, Crestiens demandons :  
Il ne porront rendre, pour vrai le vous disons,  
Si le monstiers n'est mis et par piëchtes et par mons ;  
Et s'il estoit desfaïs, jamais ne le larons  
Refaire chi endroit. Ensement averons  
Faites et acomplies nostres ertentions.”

The Caliph accordingly sends for Maistre Thumas, the Priest of the Christians, and tells him the stone must be given up :

“ Il a c. ans et plus c'on i mist à solas  
Mahon le nostre Dieu : dont che n'est mie estas  
Que li vous monstiers soit fais de nostre harnas !”

Master Thomas, in great trouble, collects his flock, mounts the pulpit, and announces the calamity. Bauduin and his convert Polibans then arrive. Bauduin recommends confession, fasting, and prayer. They follow his advice, and on the third day the miracle occurs :

“ L'escripture le dist, qui nous a chertifie  
Que le pierre Mahon, qui ou mur fut fiquie,  
Salit hors du piler, coi que nul vous en die,  
Droit en mis le moustier, c'onques ne fut brisie,  
Et demoura li traus, dont le piere ert widie,  
Sans pierre est sans quailiel, a cascade partie  
Chou deseure soustient par divine maistrie  
Tout en air proprement, n'el tenés a failie.  
Encore le voit-on en ichelle partie  
Qui croire ne m'en voelt, si voist : car je l'en prie !”

The Caliph comes to see, and declares it to be the Devil's doing. Seeing Polibans, who is his cousin, he hails him, but Polibans draws back, avowing his Christian faith. The Caliph in a rage has him off to prison. Bauduin becomes very ill, and has to sell his horse and arms. His disease is so offensive that he is thrust out of his hostel, and in his wretchedness

sitting on a stone he still avows his faith, and confesses that even then he has not received his deserts. He goes to beg in the Christian quarter, and no one gives to him ; but still his faith and love to God hold out :

“ Ensement Bauduins chelle rue cherqua  
Tant qu'à un chavetier Bauduins s'arresta  
Qui chavates cousoit ; son pain en garigna.  
Jones fu et plaisans, apertement ouvra.  
Bauduin le regarde, c'onques mot ne parla.”

The cobbler is charitable, gives him bread, shoes, and a grey coat that was a foot too short. He then asks Bauduin if he will not learn his trade ; but that is too much for the knightly stomach :

“ Et Bauduin respont, li preus et li membras,  
J'amerioie trop mieux que je fusse pendus !”

The Caliph now in his Council expresses his vexation about the miracle, and says he does not know how to disprove the faith of the Christians. A very sage old Saracen who knew Hebrew, and Latin, and some thirty languages, makes a suggestion, which is, in fact that about the moving of the Mountain, as related by Marco Polo.\* Master Thomas is sent for again, and told that they must transport the high mountain of *Thir* to the valley of *Joaquin*, which lies to the westward. He goes away in new despair and causes his clerk to *sonner le clocke* for his people. Whilst they are weeping and wailing in the church, a voice is heard desiring them to seek a certain Holy man who is at the good cobbler's, and to do him honour. God at his prayer will do a miracle. They go in procession to Bauduin, who thinks they are mocking him. They treat him as a saint, and strive to touch his old coat. At last he consents to pray along with the whole congregation.

The Caliph is in his palace with his princes, taking his ease at a window. Suddenly he starts up exclaiming :

“ \* Seignour ! Par Mahoumet que j'aoure et tieng cher,  
Le Mont de Thir enportent le deable d'enfer !”  
Li Calife s'écrite : “ Seignour, franc palasin,  
Voies le Mont de Thir qui ch'est mis au chemin !  
Vés-le-là tout en air, par mon Dieu Apolin !  
Ja bientot le verrons ens ou val Joaquin !”

\* Vol. i. pp. 65, 677. The virtuous cobbler is not left out, but is made to play second fiddle to the hero Bauduin.



The Caliph is converted, releases Polibans, and is baptized, taking the name of Bauduin, to whom he expresses his fear of the Viex de la Montagne with his *Hauts-Assis*, telling anew the story of the Assassin's Paradise, and so enlarges on the beauty of Ivorine that Bauduin is smitten, and his love heals his malady. Toleration is not learned however :

“ Bauduin, li Califes, fist baptiser sa gent  
Et qui ne voilt Dieu croire li teste on li pourfent ! ”

The Caliph gives up his kingdom to Bauduin, proposing to follow him to the Wars of Syria. And Bauduin presents the Kingdom to the Cobler.

Bauduin, the Caliph, and Prince Polibans then proceed to visit the Mountain of the Old Man. The Caliph professes to him that they want help against Godfrey of Bouillon. The Viex says he does not give a *bouton* for Godfrey ; he will send one of his *Hauts-Assis* straight to his tent, and give him a great knife of steel between *fie et poumon* !

After dinner they go out and witness the feat of devotion which we have quoted elsewhere.\* They then see the Paradise and the lovely Ivorine, with whose beauty Bauduin is struck dumb. The lady had never smiled before ; now she declares that he for whom she had long waited was come. Bauduin exclaims :

“ ‘ Madame, fu-jou chou qui sui le vous subgis ? ’  
Quant la puchelle l’ot, lors si geta j. ris,  
Et li dist : ‘ Bauduins, vous estes mes amis ! ’ ”

The Old One is vexed, but speaks pleasantly to his daughter, who replies with frightfully bad language, and declares herself to be a Christian. The father calls out to the Caliph to kill her. The Caliph pulls out a big knife and gives him a blow that nearly cuts him in two. The amiable Ivorine says she will go with Bauduin :

“ ‘ Se mes pères est mors, n’en donne un paresis ! ’ ”

We need not follow the story further, as I did not trace beyond this point any distinct derivation from our Traveller, with the exception of that allusion to the incombustible covering

of the napkin of St. Veronica, which I have quoted at pp. 194, 195 of this volume. But including this, here are at least seven different themes borrowed from Marco Polo's book, on which to be sure his poetical contemporary plays the most extraordinary variations.

### XIII. NATURE OF POLO'S INFLUENCE ON GEOGRAPHICAL KNOWLEDGE.

79. Marco Polo contributed such a vast amount of new facts to the knowledge of the Earth's surface, that one might have expected his book to have had a sudden effect upon the Science of Geography: but no such result occurred speedily, nor was its beneficial effect of any long duration.


*Tardy operation, and causes thereof.*

No doubt several causes contributed to the slowness of its action upon the notions of Cosmographers, of which the unreal character attributed to the Book, as a collection of romantic marvels rather than of geographical and historical facts, may have been one, as Santarem urges. But the essential causes were no doubt the imperfect nature of publication before the invention of the press; the traditional character which clogged geography as well as all other branches of knowledge in the Middle Ages; and the entire absence of scientific principle in what passed for geography, so that there was no organ equal to the assimilation of a large mass of new knowledge.

Of the action of the first cause no examples can be more striking than we find in the false conception of the Caspian as a gulf of the Ocean, entertained by Strabo, and the opposite error in regard to the Indian Sea held by Ptolemy, who regards it as an enclosed basin, when we contrast these with the correct ideas on both subjects possessed by Herodotus.

80. As regards the second cause alleged, we may say that down nearly to the middle of the 15th century-cosmographers, as a rule, made scarcely any attempt to reform their maps by any elaborate search for new matter, or by lights that might be collected from recent travellers. Their world was in its outline that handed down by the traditions of their craft, and sanctioned by some Father of the church,

*General characteristics of Medieval Cosmography.*

such as Orosius or Isidore, and sprinkled with a combination of classical and medieval legend. Almost universally the earth's surface is represented as filling the greater part of a circular disk, rounded by the ocean. Jerusalem occupies the central point, because it was found written in the Prophet Ezekiel: "*Haec dicit Dominus Deus: Ista est Jerusalem, in medio gentium posui eam, et in circuitu ejus terras.*" The Terrestrial Paradise was represented as occupying the extreme East, because it was found in Genesis that the Lord planted a garden eastward in Eden.\* Gog and Magog were set in the far north or north-east, because it was said again in Ezekiel: "*Ecce Ego super te Gog Principem capitis Mosoch et Thubal . . . et ascendere te faciam de lateribus Aquilonis,*" whilst, probably the topography of those mysterious nationalities was completed by a girdle of mountains out of the Alexandrian Fables. The loose and scanty nomenclature was mainly borrowed from Pliny or Mela through such Fathers as we have named; whilst vacant spaces were occupied by Amazons, Arimaspians, and the realm of Prester John. A favourite representation of the inhabited earth was this ; a great O enclosing a T, which thus divides the circle in three parts; the greater or half-circle being Asia, the two quarter circles Europe and Africa.†

81. Even Ptolemy seems to have been almost unknown; and indeed had his Geography been studied it might have tended to some greater endeavours after accuracy.

Roger  
Bacon as a  
geographer.

And Roger Bacon, whilst lamenting the exceeding deficiency of geographical knowledge in the Latin world, and purposing to essay an exacter distribution of countries, says he will not attempt to do so by latitude and longitude, for that is a system of which the Latins have learned nothing. He himself, whilst still somewhat burdened by the authoritative dicta of "saints and sages" of past times, ventures at least to criticize some of the latter, such as Pliny and Ptolemy, and declares his intention to have recourse to the

\* \* This circumstance does not however show in the Vulgate.

† "Veggiamo in prima in general la terra  
Come reside, e come il mar la serra.

Un T dentro ad un O mostra il disegno  
Come in tre parti fu diviso il Mondo,  
E la superiore è il maggior regno

ASIA chiamata: il gambo ritto è segno  
Che parte il terzo nome dal secondo:  
AFRICA, dico, da EUROPA: il mare  
Mediterraa tra esse in mezzo appare.

—*La Sfera*, del Dati, Lib. iii. st. 11.

information of those who have travelled most extensively over the Earth's surface. And judging from the good use he makes, in his description of the northern parts of the world, of the Travels of Rubruquis, whom he had known and questioned, besides diligently studying his narrative, we might have expected much in Geography from this great man, had similar materials been available to him for other parts of the earth. I do not gather, however, that he actually constructed any map.\*

82. The Map of Marino Sanuto the Elder, constructed between 1300 and 1320, may be regarded as an exceptionally favourable specimen of the cosmography in vogue, for, the author was a diligent investigator and compiler, and evidently took a considerable interest in Geography. Nor is the map without some result of these characteristics. His representation of Europe, Northern Africa, Syria, Asia Minor, Arabia and its two gulfs, is a fair approximation to general facts; his collected knowledge has enabled him to locate, with more or less of general truth, Georgia, the Iron Gates, Cathay, the Plain of Mesopotamia, Euphrates and Tigris, Persia, Bagdad, Kais, Aden (though on the wrong side of the Red Sea), Abyssinia (*Habesh*), Zangibar (*Zin*), Jidda, (*Zede*). &c. But after all the traditional forms are too strong for him. Jerusalem is still the centre of the disk of the habitable earth, so that the distance is as great from Syria to Gades in the extreme West, as from Syria to the India Interior of Prester John which terminates the extreme East. And Africa beyond the Arabian Gulf is carried, according to the Arabian modification of Ptolemy's misconception, far to the Eastward until it almost meets the prominent shores of India.

83. The first genuine medieval attempt at a geographical construction that I know of, free from the traditional *idola*, is the Map of the known World from the Portulano Mediceo (in the Laurentian Library), of which an extract is engraved in the atlas of Baldello-Boni's Polo. I need not describe it, however, because I cannot satisfy myself that it makes much use of Polo's contributions, and its facts have been embodied in a more ambitious work of the next generation, the celebrated Catalan Map of 1375 in the

Marino Sanuto the Elder.

The Catalan Map of 1375, the most complete medieval embodiment of Polo's Geography.

\* See *Opus Majus*, Venice ed. pp. 142, seqq.

great Library of Paris. This also, but on a larger scale and in a more comprehensive manner, is an honest endeavour to represent the known world on the basis of collected facts, casting aside all theories pseudo-scientific or pseudo-theological; and a very remarkable work it is. In this map it seems to me Marco Polo's influence, I will not say on geography, but on map-making, is seen to the greatest advantage. His Book is the basis of the Map as regards Central and Further Asia, and partially as regards India. His names are often sadly perverted, and it is not always easy to understand the view that the compiler took of his itineraries. Still we have Cathay admirably placed in the true position of China, as a great Empire filling the south east of Asia. The Eastern Peninsula of India is indeed absent altogether, but the Peninsula of Hither India is for the first time in the History of Geography represented with a fair approximation to its correct form and position, and Sumatra also (*Faua*) is not badly placed. Carajan, Vocian, Mien, and Bangala, are located with a just conception of their relation to Cathay and to India. Many details in India foreign to Polo's book, and some in Cathay (as well as in Turkestan and Siberia, which have been entirely derived from other sources) have been embodied in the Map. But the study of his Book has, I conceive, been essentially the basis of those great portions which I have specified, and the additional matter has not been in mass sufficient to perplex the compiler. Hence we really see in this Map something like the idea of Asia that the Traveller himself would have presented had he bequeathed a Map to us.

84. In the following age we find more frequent indications that Polo's book was diffused and read. And now that the spirit of discovery began to stir, it was apparently regarded in a juster light as a Book of Facts, and not as a mere *Romman du Grant Kaan*.\* But in fact this age produced new supplies of crude information in greater abundance than the knowledge of geographers was prepared to digest or co-ordinate, and the consequence is that the magnificent Work of Fra Mauro (1459),

Confusions in Cartography of the 16th century, from the endeavour to combine new and old information.

\* In or about 1426, Prince Pedro of Portugal, the elder brother of the illustrious Prince Henry, being on a visit to Venice was presented by the Signory with a copy of Marco Polo's book, together with a map already alluded to (*Major's P. Henry*, pp. 61, 62).

though the result of immense labour in the collection of facts and the endeavour to combine them, really gives a considerably less accurate idea of Asia than that which the Catalan Map had afforded.\*

And when at a still later date the great burst of discovery eastward and westward took effect, the results of all attempts to combine the new knowledge with the old was most unhappy. The first and crudest forms of such combinations attempted to realize the ideas of Columbus regarding the identity of his discoveries with the regions of the Great Kaan's dominion ;† but even after AMERICA had vindicated its independent position on the surface of the globe, and the new knowledge of the Portuguese had introduced CHINA where the Catalan map of the 14th century had presented CATHAY, the latter country, with the whole of Polo's nomenclature, was shoved away to the north, forming a separate system. Henceforward the influence of Polo's work on maps was simply injurious ; and when to his nomenclature was added a sprinkling of Ptolemy's, as was usual throughout the 16th century, the result was a most extraordinary hotch-potch, conveying no approximation to any consistent representation of facts.

Thus, in a map of 1522,‡ running the eye along the north of Europe and Asia from West to East, we find the following succession of names : 'Groenlandia, or Greenland, as a great peninsula overlapping that of Norvegia and Suecia ; Livonia, Plescovia and Moscovia, Tartaria bounded on the South by

\* This is partly due also to Fra Mauro's reversion to the fancy of the circular disc limiting the inhabited portion of the earth.

† An early graphic instance of this is Ruysch's famous map (1508). The following extract of a work printed as late as 1533 is an example of the like confusion in verbal description : "The Territories which are beyond the limits of Ptolemy's Tables have not yet been described on certain authority. Behind the Sinæ and the Seres, and beyond 180° of East Longitude, many countries were discovered by one Marco Polo a Venetian and others, and the sea coasts of those countries have now recently again been explored by Columbus the Genoese and Amerigo Vespucci in navigating the Western Ocean . . . . To this part (of Asia) belong the territory called that of the *Bachalæws* [or Codfish, Newfoundland], Florida, the Desert of *Lop*, *Tangut*, *Cathay*, the realm of *Mexico* (wherein is the vast city of *Temistitan*, built in the middle of a great lake, but which the older travellers styled *QUINSAY*), besides *Paria*, *Uraba*, and the countries of the *Canibals*." (*Joannis Schoneri Carolus:adhi Opus Geogr.* quoted by Humboldt, *Examen*, V. 171, 172).

‡ *Totius Europæ et Asiæ Tabula Geographica*, Auctore Thoma D. Auctupario. Edita Argentorati, MDXXII. Copied in Witsen.

*Scythia extra Imaum*, and on the East, by the Rivers *Ochardes* and *Bautisis* (out of Ptolemy), which are 'made to flow into the Arctic Sea. South of these are *Auracithis* and *Asmireæ* (Ptolemy's *Auxacitis* and *Asmiræa*), and *Serica Regio*. Then following the northern coast *Balor Regio* (?), *Judei Clausi* (the Shut-up Nations) who impinge upon the River *Polisacus*, flowing into the Northern Ocean in Lat.  $75^{\circ}$ , but which is in fact no other than Polo's *Pulisanghin*!\* Immediately south of this is *Tholomon Provincia* (Polo's again), and on the coast *Tangut*, *Cathaya*, the Rivers *Caramoran* and *Oman* (a misreading of Polo's *Quian*), *Quinsay* and *Mangi*.

85. The Maps of Mercator (1587) and Magini (1597) are similar in character, but more elaborate, introducing China as a separate system. Such indeed also is Blaeu's Map (1663) excepting that Ptolemy's contributions are reduced to one or two.

Gradual  
disappear-  
ance of  
Polo's no-  
menclature

In Sanson's Map (1659) the data of Polo and the medieval Travellers are more cautiously handled, but a new element of confusion is introduced in the form of numerous features derived from Edrisi.

It is scarcely worth while to follow the matter further. With the increase of knowledge of Northern Asia from the Russian side, and that of China from the Maps of Martini, followed by the surveys of the Jesuits, and with the real science brought to bear on Asiatic Geography by such men as De l'Isle and D'Anville, mere traditional nomenclature gradually disappeared. And the task which the study of Polo has provided for the geographers of later days has been chiefly that of determining the true localities that his book describes under obsolete or corrupted names.

86. Before concluding it may be desirable to say a few words on the subject of important knowledge other than geographical, which various persons\* have supposed that Marco Polo must have introduced from Eastern Asia to Europe.

Respecting the mariner's compass and gunpowder I shall say nothing, as no one now, I believe, imagines Marco to have had anything to do with their introduction. But from a highly respectable source in recent years we have

Alleged in-  
troduction  
of block-  
printed  
books  
into Europe  
by Marco  
Polo.

\* Vol. ii. p. I.

seen the introduction of Block-printing into Europe connected with the name of our Traveller. The circumstances are stated as follows :\*

"In the beginning of the 15th century a man named Panfilo Castaldi, of Feltre . . . was employed by the Government of the Republic to engross deeds and public edicts of various kinds . . . the initial letters at the commencement of the writing being usually ornamented with red ink, or illuminated in gold and colours.

"According to Sansovino, certain stamps or types had been invented some time previously by Pietro di Natale, Bishop of Aquileia.† These were made of Murano glass, and were used to stamp or print the outline of the large initial letters of public documents, which were afterwards filled up by hand . . . Panfilo Castaldi improved on these glass types by having others made of wood or metal : and having seen several Chinese Books, which the famous traveller Marco Polo had brought from China, and of which the entire text was printed with wooden blocks, he caused moveable wooden types to be made, each type containing a single letter, and with these he printed several broadsides and single leaves at Venice, in the year 1426. Some of these single sheets are said to be preserved among the archives at Feltre . . .

"The tradition continues that John Paus, of Mayence . . . became acquainted with Castaldi, and passed some time with him in his *Scriptorium* at Feltre :

and in short developed from the knowledge so acquired the great invention of printing. Mr. Curzon goes on to say that Panfilo Castaldi was born in 1398, and died in 1490, and that he gives the story as he found it in an article written by Dr. Jacopo Facetti, of Feltre, in a (Venetian?) newspaper called *Il Gondolier*, No. 103, of December 27th, 1843.

In a later paper Mr. Curzon thus recurs to the subject :‡

"Though none of the early block-books have dates affixed to them, many of them are with reason supposed to be more ancient than any books printed with moveable types. Their resemblance to Chinese block-books is so exact that they would almost seem to be copied from the books commonly used in China. *The impressions are taken off on one side of the paper only, and in binding both the Chinese and ancient German or Dutch block-books, the blank sides of the pages are placed opposite each other, and sometimes pasted together . . . The impressions are not taken off with printer's ink, but with a brown paint or colour, of a much thinner description, more in the nature of Indian ink, as we call it, which*

\* *A Short Account of Libraries in Italy*, by the Hon. R. Curzon ; in *Bibliog. and Hist. Miscellanies* ; *Philobiblon Society*, vol. i.

† P. dei Natali was Bishop of Equilio, a city of the Venetian Lagoons, in the latter quarter of the 14th century (see *Ughelli, Italia Sacra*, X. 87). There is no ground for connecting him with these inventions (see *App. L*).

‡ *Early History of Printing*, in *Philobiblon*, vol. vi. p. 23.



*is used in printing Chinese books.* Altogether the German and Oriental block-books are so precisely alike, in almost every respect, that we must suppose that the process of printing them must have been copied from ancient Chinese specimens, brought from that country by some early travellers, whose names have not been handed down to our times."

The writer then refers to the tradition about *Guttemberg* (so it is stated on this occasion, not *Faust*) having learned Castaldi's art, &c., mentioning a circumstance which he supposes to indicate that Guttemberg had relations with Venice; and appears to assent to the probability of the story of the art having been founded on specimens brought home by Marco Polo.

As regards the alleged invention of Panfilo Castaldi, the story as related in the first of the preceding extracts is scarcely other than a flight of patriotic fancy; and I shall show in a separate notice\* from how slender a nucleus of record it has been spun.

87. But Mr. Curzon's own observations, which I have italicized, about the resemblance of the two systems are very striking, and seem clearly to indicate the derivation of the art from China. I should suppose, however, that in the tradition, if there be any genuine tradition of the kind at Feltre, the name of Marco Polo was introduced merely because it was so prominent a name in Eastern Travel. The fact has been generally overlooked and forgotten that, for many years in the course of the 14th century, not only were missionaries of the Roman Church and Houses of the Franciscan Order established in the chief cities of China, but a regular trade was carried on overland between Italy and China, by way of Tana (or Azov), Astracan, Otrar and Kamul, insomuch that instructions for the Italian merchant following that route form the two first chapters in the Mercantile Handbook of Balducci Pegolotti (circa 1340).† Many a traveller besides Marco Polo might therefore have brought home the block-books. And this is the less to be ascribed to him because he so curiously omits to speak of the art of printing, when his subject seems absolutely to challenge its description.

Frequent opportunities for such introduction in the age following Polo's.

\* See Appendix L.

† This subject has been fully treated in *Cathay and the Way Thither*.

XIV. EXPLANATIONS REGARDING THE BASIS ADOPTED FOR THE  
PRESENT TRANSLATION.

88. It remains to say a few words regarding the basis adopted for our English version of the Traveller's record.

Ramusio's recension was that which Marsden selected for translation. But at the date of his most meritorious publication nothing was known of the real literary history of Polo's Book, and no one was aware of the peculiar value and originality of the French manuscript texts, nor had Marsden seen any of them. A translation from one of those texts is a translation at first hand; a translation from Ramusio's Italian is, as far as I can judge, the translation of a translated compilation from two or more translations, and therefore, whatever be the merits of its matter, inevitably carries us far away from the spirit and style of the original narrator. M. Pauthier, I think, did well in adopting for the text of his edition the MSS. which I have classed as of the second Type, the more as there had hitherto been no publication from those texts. But editing a text in the original language, and translating, are tasks different in their demands.

Texts followed by Marsden and by Pauthier.

89. It will be clear from what has been said in the preceding pages that I should not regard as a fair or full representation of Polo's Work, a version on which the Geographic Text did not exercise a material influence. But to adopt that Text, with all its awkwardnesses and tautologies, as the absolute subject of translation, would have been a mistake. What I have done has been, in the first instance, to translate from Pauthier's Text. The process of abridgment in this text, however it came about, has been on the whole judiciously executed, getting rid of the intolerable prolixities of manner which belong to many parts of the Original Dictation, but *as a general rule* preserving the matter. Having translated this,—not always from the Text adopted by Pauthier himself, but with the exercise of my own judgment on the various readings which that Editor lays before us,—I then compared the translation with the Geographic Text, and transferred from the latter not only all items of real substance that had been omitted, but

Eclectic formation of the English Text of this Translation.

also all expressions of special interest and character, and occasionally a greater fullness of phraseology where condensation in Pauthier's text seemed to have been carried too far. And finally I have introduced *between brackets* everything peculiar to Ramusio's version that seemed to me to have a just claim to be reckoned authentic, and that could be so introduced without harshness or mutilation. Many passages from the same source which were of interest in themselves, but failed to meet one or other of these conditions, have been given in the notes.

90. As regards the reading of proper names and foreign words, in which there is so much variation in the different MSS. and editions, I have done my best to select what seemed to be the true reading from the G. T. and Pauthier's three MSS., only in some rare instances transgressing this limit.

Mode of  
rendering  
proper  
names.

Where the MSS. in the repetition of a name afforded a choice of forms, I have selected that which came nearest the real name when known. Thus the G. T. affords *Baldasciain*, *Badascian*, *Badasciam*, *Badausiam*, *Balasian*. I adopt BADASCIAN, or in English spelling BADASHAN, because it is closest to the real name *Badakhshan*. Another place appears as COBINAN, *Cabanat*, *Cobian*. I adopt the first because it is the truest expression of the real name *Koh-benân*. In chapters 23, 24 of Book I., we have in the G. T. *Asisim*, *Asciscin*, *Asescin*, and in Pauthier's MSS. *Hasisins*, *Harsisins*, &c. I adopt ASCISCIN, or in English spelling ASHISHIN, for the same reason as before. So with *Creman*, *Crerman*, *Crermanin*, QUERMAN, Anglicé KERMAN; CORMOS, HORMOS, and many more.\*

In two or three cases I have adopted a reading which I cannot show *literatim* in any authority, but because such a form appears to be the just resultant from the variety of readings which are presented, as one takes the mean of a number of observations in surveying when no one can claim an absolute preference.

\* In Polo's diction C not unfrequently represents H, e. g., *Cormos* = Hormuz; *Camadi* probably = Hamadi; *Caagi* probably = Hochau; *Cacianfu* = Hochangfu, and so on. This is perhaps attributable to Rusticiano's Tuscan ear. A true Pisan will absolutely confound his features in the intensity of his efforts to aspirate sufficiently the letter C.

Polo's proper names, even in the French Texts, are *in the main* formed on an Italian fashion of spelling.\* I see no object in preserving such spelling in an English book, so after selecting the best reading of the name I express it in English spelling, printing *Badashan, Pashai, Kenjanfu*, instead of *Badascian, Pasciai, Quengianfu*, and so on.

And when a little trouble has been taken to ascertain the true form and force of Polo's spelling of Oriental names and technical expressions, it will be found that they are in the main as accurate as Italian lips and orthography will admit, and not justly liable to those exegetical distortions which have been too often applied to them. Thus, for example, *Çocacin, Ghel* or *Ghelan, Tonocain, Cobinan, Ondaniqu, Barguerlac, Argon, Sensin, Quescican, Toscaol, Bularguci, Zardan-dan, Anin, Cangigu, Coleman, Gaucispola, Mutfili, Avarian, Choiach*, are not, it will be seen, the ignorant blunderings which the interpretations affixed by some commentators would imply them to be, but are on the contrary all but perfectly accurate utterances of the names and words intended.

The chapter-headings I have generally taken from Pauthier's Text, but they are no essential part of the original work, and they have been slightly modified or enlarged where it seemed desirable.†

\* In the Venetian dialect *h, j, and i* are often sounded as in English, not as in Italian. Some traces of such pronunciation I think there are, as in *Coya, Carajan, Crazzi*, and in the Chinese name *Tamcha* (*supra*, p. cxxiv). But the scribe of the original work being a Tuscan, the spelling is in the main Tuscan. The sound of the *Qu* is however French, as in *Quescican, Quotsai*.

† I should have pointed out at pp. xxxvi, xxxvii, the verisimilitude of the tradition there related by Ramusio, when regarded by the light of genuine Mongol practice, such as is quoted in the last paragraph of p. 345 of this volume.

NOTA BENE.—*The Appendices frequently referred to in the course of these Introductory Notices will be found at the end of Vol. II.*



# BOOK OF MARCO POLO.

---

## PROLOGUE.

---

GREAT PRINCES, Emperors, and Kings, Dukes and Marquises, Counts, Knights and Burgesses! and People of all degrees who desire to get knowledge of the various races of mankind and of the diversities of the sundry regions of the World, take this Book and cause it to be read to you. For ye shall find therein all kinds of wonderful things, and the divers histories of the Great Hermenia, and of Persia, and of the Land of the Tartars, and of India, and of many another country of which our Book doth speak, particularly and in regular succession, according to the description of Messer Marco Polo, a wise and noble citizen of Venice, as he saw them with his own eyes. Some things indeed there be therein which he beheld not; but these he heard from men of credit and veracity. And we shall set down things seen as seen, and things heard as heard only, so that no jot of falsehood may mar the truth of our Book, and that all who shall read it or hear it read may put full faith in the truth of all its contents.

For let me tell you that since our Lord God did mould his hands our first Father Adam, even until this day, ever hath there been Christian, or Pagan, or Tartar, or any man of any nation, who in his own person had so much knowledge and experience of the divers parts of the World and its Wonders as hath had this Messer Marco! And for that reason he bethought himself

that it would be a very great pity did he not cause to be put in writing all the great marvels that he had seen, or on sure information heard of, so that other people who had not these advantages might, by his Book, get such knowledge. And I may tell you that in acquiring this knowledge he spent in those various parts of the World good six-and-twenty years. Now, being thereafter an inmate of the Prison at Genoa, he caused Messer Rusticiano of Pisa, who was in the said Prison likewise, to reduce the whole to writing; and this befel in the year 1298 from the birth of Jesus.

## CHAPTER I.

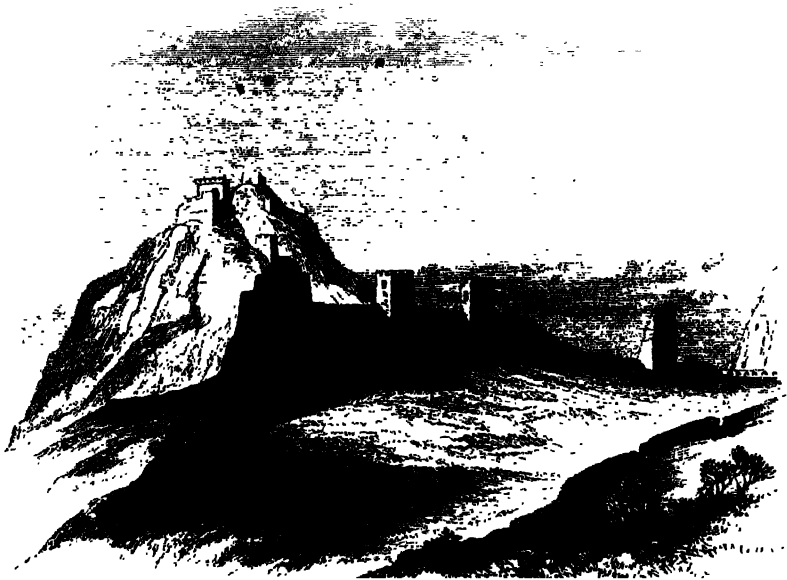
HOW THE TWO BROTHERS POLO SET FORTH FROM CONSTANTINOPLE  
TO TRAVERSE THE WORLD.

It came to pass in the year of Christ 1260, when Baldwin was reigning at Constantinople,<sup>1</sup> that Messer Nicolas Polo, the father of my lord Mark, and Messer Maffeo Polo, the brother of Messer Nicolas, were at the said city of CONSTANTINOPLE, whither they had gone from Venice with their merchant's wares. Now these two Brethren, men singularly noble, wise, and provident, took counsel together to cross the GREATER SEA on a venture of trade; so they laid in a store of jewels and set forth from Constantinople, crossing the Sea to SOLDAIA.<sup>2</sup>

NOTE 1.—Baldwin II. (de Courtenay), the last Latin Emperor of Constantinople, reigned from 1237 to 1261, when he was expelled by Michael Palaeologus.

The date in the text is, as we see, that of the Brothers' voyage across the Black Sea. It stands 1250 in all the chief texts. But the figure is certainly wrong. We shall see that, when the Brothers return to Venice in 1269, they find Mark, who, according to Ramusio's version, was *born after their departure*, a lad of fifteen. Hence, if we rely on Ramusio, they must have left Venice about 1253-54. And we shall see also

that they reached the Wolga in 1261. Hence their start from Constantinople may well have occurred in 1260, and this I have adopted as the most probable correction. Where they spent the interval between 1254 (if they really left Venice so early) and 1260, nowhere appears. But as their brother, Mark the Elder, in his Will styles himself "*whilom of Constantinople*," their head-quarters were probably there.



Castle of Soldaia or Sudak

NOTE 2. — In the Middle Ages the Black Sea, though that name (*Mare Maurum* v. *Nigrum*) was by no means unknown, was generally called *Mare Magnum* or *Majus*. Thus Chaucer :

“ In the GRETE SEE,  
At many a noble Armeec hadde he be.”

*Soldaia* or *Soldachia*, called by Orientals *Sûdâk*, stands on the S.E. coast of the Crimea, west of Kaffa. It had belonged to the Greek Empire, and had a considerable Greek population. After the events of 1204, it apparently fell to Trebizond. It was taken by the Mongols in 1222, and during that century was the great port of intercourse with what is now Russia. At an uncertain date, but about the middle of the century, the Venetians established a factory there, which in 1287 became the seat of a consul. In 1323 we find Pope John XXII. complaining to



Uzbek Khan of Sarai that the Christians had been ejected from Soldaia and their churches turned into mosques. Ibn Bafuta, who alludes to this strife, counts Sudak as one of the four great ports of the World. The Genoese got Soldaia in 1365 and built strong defences, still to be seen. Some of the Arab Geographers call the Sea of Azov the Sea of Sudak.

The Elder Marco Polo in his Will (1280) bequeaths to the Franciscan Friars of the place a house of his in *Soldachia*, reserving life occupation to his own son and daughter then residing in it. Probably this establishment already existed when the two Brothers went thither. (*Elie de Laprimaudaie*, passim; *Gold. Horde*, 87; *Mosheim*, App. 148; *Ibn Bat.* I. 28, II. 414; *Cathay*, 231-33; *Heyd*, II. passim.)

---

## CHAPTER II.

### HOW THE TWO BROTHERS WENT ON BEYOND SOLDAIA.

HAVING stayed a while at Soldaia, they considered the matter, and thought it well to extend their journey further. So they set forth from Soldaia and travelled till they came to the court of a certain Tartar Prince, BARCA KAAH by name, whose residences were at SARA' and at BOLGARA, [and who was esteemed one of the most liberal and courteous Princes that ever was among the Tartars].<sup>2</sup> This Barca was delighted at the arrival of the Two Brothers, and treated them with great honour; so they presented to him the whole of the jewels that they had brought with them. The Prince was highly pleased with these, and accepted the offering most graciously, causing the Brothers to receive at least twice its value.

After they had spent a twelvemonth at the court of this Prince there broke out a great war between Barca and Aláu, the Lord of the Tartars of the Levant, and great hosts were mustered on either side.<sup>3</sup>

But in the end Barca, the Lord of the Tartars of the ~~Ponent~~, was defeated, though on both sides there was great slaughter. And by reason of this war no one could travel

without peril of being taken; thus it was at least on the road by which the Brothers had come, though there was no obstacle to their travelling forward. So the Brothers, finding they could not retrace their steps, determined to go forward. Quitting Bolgara, therefore, they proceeded to a city called UCACA, which was at the extremity of the kingdom of the Lord of the Ponent;<sup>4</sup> and thence departing again, and passing the great River Tigris, they travelled across a Desert which extended for seventeen days' journey, and wherein they found neither town nor village, falling in only with the tents of Tartars occupied with their cattle at pasture.<sup>5</sup>

NOTE I. —Burka Khan, third son of Jüji the first-born of Chinghiz, ruled the *Ulus* of Juji and Empire of Kipchak (Southern Russia) from 1257 to 1265. He was the first Musulman sovereign of his race. His chief residence was at SARAI (Sara of the text) a city founded by his brother and predecessor Bätü, on the banks of the Akhtuba branch of the Wolga. In the next century Ibn Batuta describes Sarai as a very handsome and populous city, so large that it made half a day's journey to ride through it. The inhabitants were Mongols, Aäs (or Alans), Kipchaks, Circassians, Russians, and Greeks, besides the foreign Moslem merchant; who had a walled quarter. Another Mahomedan traveller of the same century says the city itself was not walled, but, "The Khan's Palace was a great edifice surmounted by a golden crescent weighing two *kantars* of Egypt, and encompassed by a wall flanked with towers," &c.

Sarai became the seat of both a Latin and a Russian metropolitan, and of more than one Franciscan convent. It was destroyed by Timur on his second invasion of Kipchak (1395-6), and extinguished by the Russians a century later. It is the scene of Chaucer's half-told tale of Cambuscan:—

"At *Sarra*, in the Londe of Tartarie,  
There dwelt a King that werried Russie."

Several sites exhibiting extensive ruins near the banks of the Akhtuba have been identified with Sarai; two in particular. One of these is not far from the great elbow of the Wolga at Tzaritzyn: the other much lower down, at Selitrennoi Gorodok or "Saltpetre-Town," not far above Astracan.

The upper site exhibits by far the most extensive traces of former population, and is declared unhesitatingly to be the sole site of Sarai by M. Gregorieff, who carried on excavations among the remains for four years, though with what precise results I have not been able to learn.

The most dense part of the remains, consisting of mounds and earth-works, traces of walls, buildings, cisterns, dams, and innumerable canals, extends for about  $7\frac{1}{2}$  miles in the vicinity of the town of Tzarev, but a tract of 66 miles in length and 300 miles in circuit, commencing from near the head of the Akhtuba, presents remains of like character, though of less density, marking the ground occupied by the villages which encircled the capital. About  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles to the N.W. of Tzarev, a vast mass of such remains, surrounded by the traces of a brick rampart, points out the presumable position of the Imperial Palace.

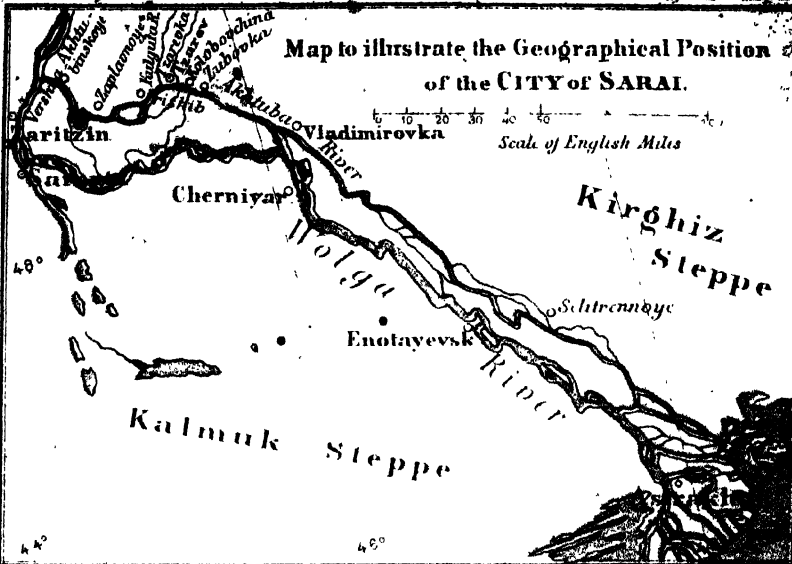
M. Gregorieff appears to admit no alternative. Yet it seems certain that the indications of Abulfeda, Pegolotti, and others, with regard to the position of the capital in the early part of the 14th century, are not consistent with a site so far from the Caspian. Moreover, F. H. Müller states that the site near Tsarev is known to the Tartars as the "Sarai of Janibek Khan." Now it is worthy of note that in the coinage of Janibek we repeatedly find as the place of mintage, *New Sarai*. Is it not possible, therefore, that both the sites which we have mentioned were successively occupied by the Mongol capital; that the original Sarai of Batu was at Selitrennoi Gorodok, and that the *New Sarai* of Janibek was established by him or one of his immediate predecessors on the upper Akhtuba?

(*Four Years of Archæological Researches among the Ruins of Sarai* [in Russian], by M. Gregorieff [who appears to have also published a pamphlet specially on the site, but this has not been available]; *Historisch-geographische Darstellung des Stromsystems der Wolga*, von Ferd. Heinr. Müller, Berlin, 1839, 568-77; *Ibn Bat.* II. 447; *Not. et Extraits*, XIII. i. 286; *Pallas, Voyages; Cathay*, 231, &c.; *Erdmann, Num. Asiatici*, pp. 362 seqq.)

NOTE 2.—BOLGHAR, our author's Bolgara, was the capital of the region sometimes called Great Bulgaria, by Abulfeda *Inner Bulgaria*, and stood a few miles from the left bank of the Wolga, in latitude about  $54^{\circ} 54'$ , and 90 miles below Kazan. The old Arab writers regarded it as nearly the limit of the habitable world, and told wonders of the cold, the brief summer nights, and the fossil ivory that was found in its vicinity. This was exported, and with peltry, wax, honey, hazel-nuts, and Russia leather, formed the staple articles of trade. The last item derived from Bolghar the name which it still bears all over Asia. Bolghar seems to have been the northern limit of Arab travel, and was visited by the curious (by Ibn Batuta among others) in order to witness the phenomena of the short summer night, as travellers now visit Hammerfest to witness its entire absence.





Russian chroniclers speak of an earlier capital of the Bulgarian kingdom, Brakhimov near the mouth of the Kama, destroyed by Andrew, Grand Duke of Rostov and Susdal, about 1160; and this may have been the city referred to in the earlier Arabic accounts. The fullest of these is by Ibn Fozlán, who accompanied an embassy from the Court of

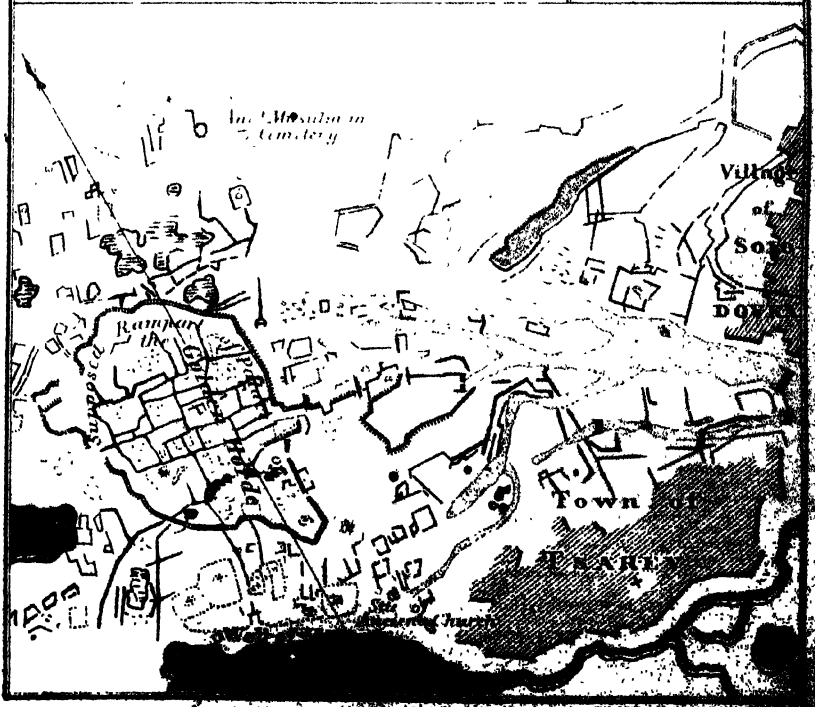
**Map to illustrate the Geographical Position  
of the CITY of SARAI.**



**Part of the Remains of the CITY OF SARAI near TZAREV  
North of the AKHTUBA Branch of the VOLGA**

Printed by the Government Printer, Ottawa.

-  } *Traces of Constructions*  
*of sorts*  
 *Barrows*  
 *Dams*  
 *Traces of canals*





Baghdad to Bolghar, in A.D. 921. The King and people had about this time been converted to Islam, having previously, as it would seem, professed Christianity. Nevertheless a Mahomedan writer of the 14th century says the people had then long renounced Islam for the worship of the Cross. (*Not. et Extr.* XIII. i. 270.)

Bolghar was first captured by the Mongols in 1225. It seems to have perished early in the 15th century, after which Kazan practically took its place. Its position is still marked by a village called Bolgari, where ruins of Mahomedan character remain, and where coins and inscriptions have been found. Coins of the Kings of Bolghar, struck in the 10th century, have been described by Fraehn, as well as coins of the Mongol period struck at Bolghar. Its latest known coin is of A.H. 818 (A.D. 1415-16). A history of Bolghar was written in the first half of the 12th century by Yakub Ibn Noman, Kadhi of the city, but this is not known to be extant.



Ruins of Bolghar.

Fraehn shows ground for believing the people to have been a mixture of Fins, Slavs, and Turks. Nicephorus Gregoras supposes that they took their name from the great river on which they dwelt (*Βούλγα*).

The severe and lasting winter is spoken of by Ibn Fozlan and other old writers in terms that seem to point to a modern mitigation of climate. It is remarkable, too, that Ibn Fozlan speaks of the aurora as of very frequent occurrence, which is not now the case in that latitude. We may suspect this frequency to have been connected with the greater cold indicated, and perhaps with a different position of the magnetic pole. Ibn Fozlan's account of the aurora is very striking:—"Shortly before sunset the horizon became all very ruddy, and at the same time I heard sounds in the upper air, with a dull rustling. I looked up and beheld sweeping over me a fire-red cloud, from which these sounds issued, and in it movements as it were of men and horses; the men grasping bows, lances, and swords. This I saw, or thought I saw. Then there appeared a white cloud of like aspect; in it also I beheld armed horsemen, and these rushed against the former as one squadron of horse

charges another. We were so terrified at this that we turned with humble prayer to the Almighty, whereupon the natives about us wondered and broke into loud laughter. We, however, continued to gaze, seeing how one cloud charged the other, remained confused with it a while, and then sundered again. These movements lasted deep into the night, and then all vanished."

(*Frachn, Ueber die Wolga-Bulgaren*, Petersb. 1832; *Gold. Horde*, 8, 9, 423-4; *Not. et Extr.* II. 541; *Ibn Bat.* II. 398; *Büschings Mag.* V. 492; *Erdmann, Numi Asiat.* I. 315-318, 333-4, 520-535; *Nicéph. Gregoras*, II. 2, 2.)

NOTE 3.—ALAU is Polo's representation of the name of Hulákú, brother of the Great Kaans Mangu and Kublai, and founder of the Mongol dynasty in Persia. In the Mongol pronunciation, guttural and palatal consonants are apt to be elided, hence this spelling. The same name is written by Pope Alexander IV., in addressing the Khan, *Ola*, by Pachymeres and Gregoras *Χαλαῦ* and *Χαλαοῦ*, by Hayton *Haolon*, by Ibn Batuta *Hulúin*, as well as in a letter of Hulaku's own, as given by Makrizi.

The war in question is related in Rashíduddín's history, and by Polo himself towards the end of the work. It began in the summer of 1262, and ended about eight months later. Hence the Polos must have reached Barka's Court in 1261.

Marco always applies to the Mongol Khans of Persia the title of "Lords of the East" (*Levant*), and to the Khans of Kipchak that of "Lords of the West" (*Ponent*). We use the term *Levant* still with a similar specific application, and in another form *Anatolia*. I think it best to preserve the terms *Levant* and *Ponent* when used in this way.

NOTE 4.—UKAKA or UKEK was a town on the right bank of the Wolga, nearly equidistant between Sarai and Bolghar, and about six miles south of the modern Saratov, where a village called *Uwek* still exists. Ukek is not mentioned before the Mongol domination, and is supposed to have been of Mongol foundation, as the name Ukek is said in Mongol to signify a dam of hurdles. The city is mentioned by Abulfeda as marking the extremity of "the empire of the Barka Tartars," and Ibn Batuta speaks of it as "one day distant from the hills of the Russians." Polo therefore means that it was the frontier of the Ponent towards Russia. Ukek was the site of a Franciscan convent in the 14th century; it is mentioned several times in the campaigns of Timur, and was destroyed by his army. It is not mentioned under the form Ukek after this, but appears as *Uwek* and *Uwesh* in Russian documents of the 16th century. Perhaps this was always the Slavonic form, for it already is written *Uguech* (= Uwek) in Wadding's 14th century catalogue of convents. Anthony Jenkinson, in Hakluyt, gives an observation of its latitude, as *Oweke* (51° 40'), and Christopher Burrough, in the same collection, gives a description of it as *Oueak*, and the latitude as 51° 30'.

In his time (1579) there were the remains of a "very faire stone castle" and city, with old tombs exhibiting sculptures and inscriptions. All these have long vanished. Burrough was told by the Russians that the town "was swallowed into the earth by the justice of God, for the wickedness of the people that inhabited the same." Lepechin in 1769 found nothing remaining but part of an earthen rampart and some underground vaults of large bricks, which the people dug out for use. He speaks of coins and other relics as frequently found, and the like have been found more recently. Coins with Mongol-Arab inscriptions, struck at Ukek by Tuktugai Khan in 1306, have been described by Fraehn and Erdmann.

(*Fraehn, Ueber die ehemalige Mong. Stadt Ukek, &c.*, Petersb. 1835; *Gold. Horde; Ibn. Bat.* II. 414; *Abulfeda, in Büsching*, V. 365; *Ann. Minorum*, sub anno, 1400; *Petis de la Croix*, II. 355, 383, 388; *Hakluyt*, ed. 1809, I. 375 and 422; *Lepechin, Tagebuch der Reise, &c.*, I. 235-7.)

NOTE 5.—The great River 'Tigeri or Tigris is the Wolga, as Pauthier rightly shows. It receives the same name from the Monk Pascal of Vittoria in 1338 (*Cathay*, p. 231). Perhaps this rose out of some legend that the Tigris was a reappearance of the same river. The ecclesiastical historian, Nicephorus Callistus, appears to imply that the Tigris coming from Paradise flows under the Caspian to emerge in Kurdistan (see IX. 19).

The "17 days" applies to one stretch of desert. The whole journey from Ukek to Bokhara would take some 60 days at least. Ibn Batuta is 58 days from Sarai to Bokhara, and of the last section he says "we entered the Desert which extends between Khwarizm and Bokhara, and which has an extent of 18 days' journey (III. 19).

## CHAPTER III.

HOW THE TWO BROTHERS, AFTER CROSSING A DESERT, CAME TO THE CITY OF BOCARA, AND FELL IN WITH CERTAIN ENVOYS THERE.

AFTER they had passed the desert, they arrived at a very great and noble city called BOCARA, the territory of which belonged to a king whose name was Barac, and is also called Bocara. The city is the best in all Persia.' And when they had got thither, they found they could neither proceed further forward, nor yet turn back again; wherefore



they abode in that city of Bocara for three years. And whilst they were sojourning in that city, there came from Alau, Lord of the Levant, Envoys on their way to the Court of the Great Kaan, the Lord of all the Tartars in the world. And when the Envoys beheld the Two Brothers they were amazed, for they had never before seen Latins in that part of the world. And they said to the Brothers: "Gentlemen, if ye will take our counsel, ye will find great honour and profit shall come thereof!" So they replied, that they would be right glad to learn how. "In truth," said the Envoys, "the Great Kaan hath never seen any Latins, and he hath a great desire so to do. Wherefore, if ye will keep us company to his Court, ye may depend upon it that he will be right glad to see you, and will treat you with great honour and liberality; whilst in our company ye shall travel with perfect security, and need fear to be molested by nobody."<sup>2</sup>

NOTE 1.—Hayton also calls Bokhara a city of Persia, and I see Vámbéry says that, up till the conquest by Chinghiz, Bokhara, Samarkand, Balkh, &c., were considered to belong to Persia. (*Travels*, p. 377.)

King Barac is Borrak Khan, great grandson of Chagatai, and sovereign of the Ulús of Chagatai, from 1264 to 1270. The Polos, no doubt, reached Bokhara before 1264, but Borrak must have been sovereign some time before they left it.

NOTE 2.—The language of the envoys seems rather to imply that they were the Great Kaan's own people returning from the Court of Hulaku. And Rashid mentions that Sartak, the Kaan's ambassador to Hulaku, returned from Persia in the year that the latter prince died. It may have been his party that the Venetians joined, for the year almost certainly was the same, viz. 1265. If so, another of the party was Bayan, afterwards the greatest of Kublai's captains, and much celebrated in the sequel of this book (see *Erdmann's Temülschin*, p. 214).

Marsden justly notes that Marco habitually speaks of *Latins*, never of *Franks*. Yet I suspect his own mental expression was *Farangi*.

## • CHAPTER IV.

HOW THE TWO BROTHERS TOOK THE ENVOYS' COUNSEL, AND WENT  
TO THE COURT OF THE GREAT KAAH.

So when the Two Brothers had made their arrangements, they set out on their travels, in company with the Envoys, and journeyed for a whole year, going northward and north-eastward, before they reached the Court of that Prince. And on their journey they saw many marvels of divers and sundry kinds, but of these we shall say nothing at present, because Messer Mark, who has likewise seen them all, will give you a full account of them in the Book which follows.

## CHAPTER V.

HOW THE TWO BROTHERS ARRIVED AT THE COURT OF THE  
GREAT KAAH.

WHEN the Two Brothers got to the Great Kaan, he received them with great honour and hospitality, and showed much pleasure at their visit, asking them a great number of questions. First he asked about the emperors, how they maintained their dignity, and administered justice in their dominions; and how they went forth to battle, and so forth. And then he asked the like questions about the kings and princes and other potentates.

## CHAPTER VI.

HOW THE GREAT KAAH ASKED ALL ABOUT THE MANNERS OF THE  
CHRISTIANS, AND PARTICULARLY ABOUT THE POPE OF ROME.

AND then he inquired about the Pope and the Church, and about all that is done at Rome, and all the customs of

the Latins. And the Two Brothers told him the truth in all its particulars, with order and good sense, like sensible men as they were; and this they were able to do as they knew the Tartar language well.<sup>1</sup>

---

NOTE 1.—The word generally used for Pope in the original is *Apostolle* (*Apostolicus*), the usual French expression of that age.

It is remarkable that for the most part the text edited by Pauthier has the correcter Oriental form *Tatar*, instead of the usual *Tartar*.

---

## CHAPTER VII.

HOW THE GREAT KAAH SENT THE TWO BROTHERS AS HIS ENVOYS TO THE POPE.

WHEN that Prince, whose name was CUBLAY KAAH, Lord of the Tartars all over the earth, and of all the kingdoms and provinces and territories of that vast quarter of the world, had heard all that the Brothers had to tell him about the ways of the Latins, he was greatly pleased, and he took it into his head that he would send them on an Embassy to the Pope. So he urgently desired them to undertake this mission along with one of his Barons; and they replied that they would gladly execute all his commands as those of their Sovereign Lord. Then the Prince sent to summon to his presence one of his Barons whose name was COGATAL, and desired him to get ready, for it was proposed to send him to the Pope along with the Two Brothers. The Baron replied that he would execute the Lord's commands to the best of his ability.

After this the Prince caused letters from himself to the Pope to be indited in the Tartar tongue,<sup>1</sup> and committed them to the Two Brothers and to that Baron of his own, and charged them with what he wished them to say to the Pope. Now the contents of the letter were to this pur-

port: He begged that the Pope would send as many as an hundred persons of our Christian faith; intelligent men, acquainted with the Seven Arts,<sup>2</sup> well qualified to enter into controversy, and able clearly to prove by force of argument to idolaters and other kinds of folk, that the Law of Christ was best, and that all other religions were false and naught; and that if they would prove this, he and all under him would become Christians and the Church's liegemen. Finally he charged his Envoys to bring back to him some Oil of the Lamp which burns on the Sepulchre of our Lord at Jerusalem.<sup>3</sup>

NOTE 1.-- The appearance of the Great Kaan's letter may be illustrated by two letters preserved in the French archives; one from Arghun Khan of Persia (1289), and the other from his son Oljaitu (1305), to Philip the Fair. These are both in the Mongol language, and, according to Abel Rémusat, in the Uigur character, the parent of the present Mongol writing. Facsimiles of the letters are given in Rémusat's paper on intercourse with Mongol Princes, in *Mém. de l'Acad. des Inscriptions*, vols. vii. and viii.

NOTE 2.-- The "Seven Arts," from a date reaching nearly back to classical times, and down through the Middle Ages, expressed the whole circle of a liberal education. It is to these Seven Arts that the degrees in arts were understood to apply. They were divided into the *Trivium* of Rhetoric, Logic, and Grammar, and the *Quadrivium* of Arithmetic, Astronomy, Music, and Geometry. The 38th epistle of Seneca was in many MSS. (according to Lipsius) entitled "*L. Annæi Senecæ Liber de Septem Artibus liberalibus*." I do not find, however, that Seneca there mentions categorically more than five, viz., Grammar, Geometry, Music, Astronomy, and Arithmetic. In the 5th century we find the Seven Arts to form the successive subjects of the last seven books of the work of Martianus Capella, much used in the schools during the early Middle Ages. The Seven Arts will be found enumerated in the verses of Tzetzes (*Chil. XI.* 525), and allusions to them in the mediæval romances are endless. Thus, in one of the "*Gestes d'Alexandre*," a chapter is headed "*Comment Aristotele aprent à Alixandre les Sept Arts*." In the tale of the Seven Wise Masters, Diocletian selects that number of tutors for his son, each to instruct him in one of the Seven Arts. In the romance of *Erec and Eneide* we have a dress on which the fairies had portrayed the Seven Arts (*Franc-Michel, Recherches*, &c. II. 82); in the *Roman de Mahomet* the young impostor is master of all the seven. See also Dante, *Convito*, *Trat. II.* c. 14.

ancient city, and fragments of old columns are embedded in its walls of cut stone. The castle formerly communicated by a causeway with an advanced work on an island before the harbour. The ruins of the city occupy a large space. (*Langlois, V. en Cilicie*, p. 429-31; see also *Beaufort's Karamania*, near the end.)



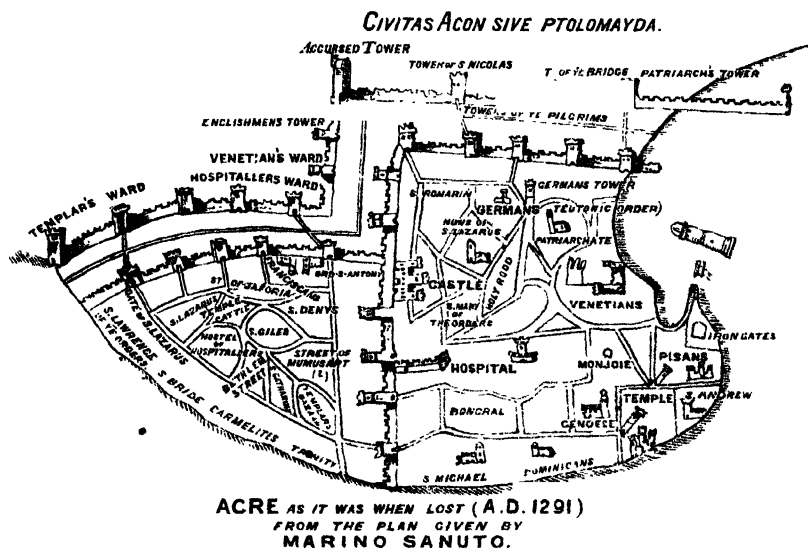
Castle of Ayas.

## CHAPTER IX.

### HOW THE TWO BROTHERS CAME TO THE CITY OF ACRE.

THEY departed from LAYAS and came to ACRE, arriving there in the month of April, in the year of Christ 1269, and then they learned that the Pope was dead. And when they found that the Pope was dead (his name was Pope \* \* \*), they went to a certain wise churchman who was Legate for the whole kingdom of Egypt, and a man of great authority, by name THEOBALD OF PIACENZA, and him of the mission on which they were come. When Legate heard their story, he was greatly surprised, and deemed the thing to be of great honour and advantage

for the whole of Christendom. So his answer to the two Ambassador Brothers was this: "Gentlemen, ye see that the Pope is dead; wherefore ye must needs have patience until a new Pope be made, and then shall ye be able to execute your charge." Seeing well enough that what the Legate said was just, they observed: "But while the Pope is a-making, we may as well go to Venice and visit our households." So they departed from Acre and went to



Negropont, and from Negropont they continued their voyage to Venice.<sup>1</sup> On their arrival there, Messer Nicolas found that his wife was dead, and that she had left behind her a son of fifteen years of age, whose name was MARCO; and 'tis of him that this Book tells.<sup>2</sup> The Two Brothers abode at Venice a couple of years, tarrying until a Pope should be made.

NOTE 1.—The deceased Pope's name is omitted both in the Geog. Text and in Pauthier's, clearly because neither Rusticiano nor Polo remembered it. It is supplied correctly in the Crusca Italian as *Clement*, and in Ramusio as *Clement IV.*

It is not clear that *Theobald*, though generally adopted, is the ecclesiastic's proper name. It appears in different MSS. as *Teald* (G. T.), *Ceabo* for *Teabo* (Pauthier), *Odoaldo* (Crusca), and in the Riccardian as *Thebaldus de Vice-comitibus de Placentia*, which corresponds to Ramusio's version. Most of the ecclesiastical chroniclers call him *Tedaldus*, some *Thealdus*. *Tedaldo* is a real name, occurring in Boccaccio (3d Day, Novel 7).

NOTE 2.—After the expulsion of the Venetians from Constantinople, Negropont was the centre of their influence in Romania. On the final return of the travellers they again take Negropont on their way.

NOTE 3.—The *édition* of the Soc. de Géographie makes Mark's age *twelve*, but I have verified from inspection the fact noticed by Pauthier that the *manuscript* has distinctly *xv.* like all the other old texts. In Ramusio it is *nineteen*, but this is doubtless an arbitrary correction to suit the mistaken date (1250) assigned for the departure of the father from Constantinople.

There is nothing in the old French texts to justify the usual statement that Marco was born after the departure of his father from Venice. All that the G. T. says is: "Meser Nicolau treuve que sa fame estoit morte, et les remès un filz de xv. anz que avoit à nom Marc," and Pauthier's text is to the same effect. Ramusio, indeed, has: "M. Niccolo trovò che sua moglie era morta, la quale nella sua partita aveva partorito un figlio," and the other versions that are based on Pepino's seem all to have like statements.

## CHAPTER X.

HOW THE TWO BROTHERS AGAIN DEPARTED FROM VENICE, ON THEIR WAY BACK TO THE GREAT KAAH, AND TOOK WITH THEM MARK, THE SON OF MESSER NICOLAS.

WHEN the Two Brothers had tarried as long as I have told you, and saw that never a Pope was made, they said that their return to the Great Kaan must be put off no longer. So they set out from Venice, taking Mark along with them, and went straight back to Acre, where they found the Legate of whom we have spoken. They had a good deal of discourse with him concerning the matter, and asked his permission to go to JERUSALEM to get some Oil from

the Lamp on the Sepulchre, to carry with them to the Great Kaan, as he had enjoined.<sup>1</sup> The Legate giving them leave, they went from Acre to Jerusalem and got some of the Oil, and then returned to Acre, and went to the Legate and said to him: "As we see no sign of a Pope's being made, we desire to return to the Great Kaan; for we have already tarried long, and there has been more than enough delay." To which the Legate replied: "Since 'tis your wish to go back, I am well content." Wherefore he caused letters to be written for delivery to the Great Kaan, bearing testimony that the Two Brothers had come in all good faith to accomplish his charge, but that as there was no Pope they had been unable to do so.

NOTE 1.—In a Pilgrimage of date apparently earlier than this, the Pilgrim says of the Sepulchre: "The Lamp which had been placed by His head (when He lay there) still burns on the same spot day and night. We took a blessing from it (*i.e.* apparently took some of the oil as a beneficent memorial), and replaced it" (*Itinerarium Antonini Placentini* in *Bollandists*, May, vol. ii. p. xx).

## CHAPTER XI.

HOW THE TWO BROTHERS SET OUT FROM ACRE, AND MARK ALONG WITH THEM.

WHEN the Two Brothers had received the Legate's letters, they set forth from Acre to return to the Grand Kaan, and got as far as Layas. But shortly after their arrival there they had news that the Legate aforesaid was chosen Pope, taking the name of Pope Gregory of Piacenza; news which the Two Brothers were very glad indeed to hear. And presently there reached them at Layas a message from the Legate, now the Pope, desiring them, on the part of the Apostolic See, not to proceed further on their journey, but to return to him incontinently. And what



shall I tell you? The King of Hermeria caused a galley to be got ready for the Two Ambassador Brothers, and despatched them to the Pope at Acre.'

NOTE 1.—The death of Pope Clement IV. occurred on St. Andrew's day (29th Nov.), 1268; the election of Tedaldo or Tebaldo of Piacenza, a member of the Visconti family, and Archdeacon of Liège, did not take place till 1st September, 1271, owing to the factions among the



Portrait of Pope Gregory X.

cardinals. And it is said that some of them, anxious only to get away, voted for Theobald in full belief that he was dead. The conclave, in its inability to agree, had named a committee of six with full powers, which the same day elected Theobald, on the recommendation of the Cardinal Bishop of Portus (John de Tolet, said, in spite of his name, to have been an Englishman). This facetious dignitary had suggested that the roof should be taken off the Palace at Viterbo where they sat, to allow the divine influences to descend more freely on their counsels (*quia nequeunt ad nos per tot tecta ingredi*). According to some, these doggrel

verses, current on the occasion, were extemporized by Cardinal John in the pious exuberance of his glee:

"Papatús munus tulit Archidiaconus unus  
Quem Patrem Patrum fecit discordia Fratrum."

The Archdeacon, a man of great weight and gravity of character, had gone to the Holy Land in consequence of differences with his Bishop (of Liège), who was a disorderly liver, and during his stay there he contracted great intimacy with Prince Edward of England (Edward I.). Some authors, e.g. John Villani (VIII. 39), say that he was Legate in Syria; others, as Rainaldus, deny this; but Polo's statement, and the authority which the Archdeacon took on himself in writing to the Kaan, seem to show that he had some such position.

He took the name of Gregory X., and before his departure from

Acre, preached a moving sermon on the text, "*If I forget thee, O Jerusalem,*" &c. Prince Edward fitted him out for his voyage.

Gregory reigned barely four years, dying at Arezzo 10th January, 1276. His character stood high to the last, and some of the Northern Martyrologies enrolled him among the saints, but there has never been canonization by Rome. The people of Arezzo used to celebrate his anniversary with torch-light gatherings at his tomb, and plenty of miracles were alleged to have occurred there. The tomb still stands in the Duomo at Arezzo, a handsome work by Margaritone, an artist in all branches, who was the Pope's contemporary. There is an engraving of it in *Gonnelli, Mon. Sepolc. di Toscana*.

(*Fra Pipino* in *Muratori* IX. 700; *Rainaldi Annal.* III. 252 seqq.; *Wadding*, sub. an. 1271; *Bollandists*, 10th January; *Palatii, Gesta Pontif. Roman.* vol. iii., and *Fasti Cardinalium*, l. 463, &c.)

## CHAPTER XII.

### HOW THE TWO BROTHERS PRESENTED THEMSELVES BEFORE THE NEW POPE.

AND when they had been thus honourably conducted to Acre they proceeded to the presence of the Pope, and paid their respects to him with humble reverence. He received them with great honour and satisfaction, and gave them his blessing. He then appointed two Friars of the Order of Preachers to accompany them to the Great Kaan, and to do whatever might be required of them. These were unquestionably as learned Churchmen as were to be found in the Province at that day—one being called Friar Nicolas of Vicenza, and the other Friar William of Tripoli.<sup>1</sup> He delivered to them also proper credentials, and letters in reply to the Great Kaan's messages [and gave them authority to ordain priests and bishops, and to give every kind of absolution, as if given by himself in proper person; sending by them also many fine vessels of crystal as presents to the Great Kaan].<sup>2</sup> So when they had got all that was needful, they took leave of the Pope, receiving his benediction;

and the four set out together from Acre, and went to Layas, accompanied always by Messer Nicolas's son Marco.

Now, about the time that they reached Layas, Bendocquedar, the Soldan of Babylon, invaded Hermenia with a great host of Saracens, and ravaged the country, so that our Envoys ran a great peril of being taken or slain.<sup>3</sup> And when the Preaching Friars saw this they were greatly frightened, and said that go they never would. So they made over to Messer Nicolas and Messer Maffeo all their credentials and documents, and took their leave, departing in company with the Master of the Temple.<sup>4</sup>

NOTE 1.—Friar William, of Tripoli, of the Dominican convent at Acre, appears to have served there as early as 1250. He is known as the author of a book, *De Statu Saracenorum post Ludovici Regis de Syria reditum*, dedicated to Theoldus, Archdeacon of Liège (i.e. Pope Gregory). Of this some extracts are printed in Duchesne's *Hist. Francorum Scriptores*. There are two MSS. of it with different titles, in the Paris Library, and a French version in that of Berne. A MS. in Cambridge Univ. library, which contains among other things a copy of Pepino's Polo, has also the work of Friar William:—"Willemus Tripolitanus Aconensis Conventus, de Egressu Machometi et Saracenorum, atque progressu eorumdam, de Statu Saracenorum," &c. It is imperfect; it is addressed THEOBALDO Ecclesiarcho digno Sancte Terre Peregrino Sancto. And from a cursory inspection I imagine that the Tract appended to one of the Polo MSS. in the British Museum (Addl. MSS., No. 19,952) is the same work or part of it. To the same author is ascribed a tract called *Clades Damiatæ*. (Duchesne, V. 432; D'Avezac in *Rec. de Voyages*, IV. 406; Quétif, *Script. Ord. Praed.* I. 264-5; *Catal. of MSS. in Camb. Univ. Library*, I. 22.)

NOTE 2.—I presume that the powers stated in this passage from Ramusio to have been conferred on the Friars are exaggerated. In letters of authority granted in like cases by Pope Gregory's successors, Nicolas III. (in 1278) and Boniface VIII. (in 1299) the missionary friars to remote regions are empowered to absolve from excommunication and release from vows, to settle matrimonial questions, to found churches and appoint *idoneos rectores*, to authorize Oriental clergy who should publicly submit to the Apostolic See to enjoy the *privilegium clericale*, whilst in the absence of bishops those among the missionaries who were priests might consecrate cemeteries, altars, palls, &c., admit to the Order of Acolytes, but nothing beyond (see Mosheim, *Hist. Tartar. Eccles.* App. Nos. 23 and 42).

NOTE 3.—The statement here about Bundúkdár's invasion of Cilician Armenia is a difficulty. He had invaded it in 1266, and his second devastating invasion, during which he burnt both Layas and Sis, the king's residence, took place in 1275, a point on which Marino Sanuto is at one with the Oriental Historians. Now we know from Rainaldus that Pope Gregory left Acre in November or December, 1271, and the text appears to imply that our travellers left Acre before him. The utmost corroboration that I can find lies in the following facts stated by Makrizi.

On the 13th Safar A.H. 670 (20th September, 1271), Bundúkdár arrived unexpectedly at Damascus, and after a brief raid against the Ismaelians he returned to that city. In the middle of Rabi I. (about 20-25 October) the Tartars made an incursion in northern Syria, and the troops of Aleppo retired towards Hamah. There was great alarm at Damascus; the Sultan sent orders to Cairo for reinforcements, and these arrived at Damascus on the 9th November. The Sultan then advanced on Aleppo, sending corps likewise towards Marash (which was within the Armenian frontier) and Harran. At the latter place the Tartars were attacked and those in the town slaughtered; the rest retreated. The Sultan was back at Damascus, and off on a different expedition by 7th December. Hence, if the travellers arrived at Ayas towards the latter part of November they would probably find alarm existing at the advance of Bundúkdár, though matters did not turn out so serious as they imply.

"Babylon," of which Bundúkdár is here styled Sultan, means Cairo, commonly so styled (*Bambellonia* *d'Egitto*) in that age. Babylon of Egypt is mentioned by Diodorus quoting Ctesias, by Strabo, and by Ptolemy; it was the station of a Roman Legion in the days of Augustus, and still survives in the name of *Babul*, close to Old Cairo.

Malik Dáhir Ruknuddín Bibars Bundúkdári, a native of Kipchak, was originally sold at Damascus for 800 dirhems (about 18*l.*), and returned by his purchaser because of a blemish. He was then bought by the Amír Aláuddín Aidekin *Bundúkdár* ("The Arblasteer") whose surname he afterwards adopted. He became the fourth of the Mameluke Sultans, and reigned from 1259 to 1276. The two great objects of his life were the repression of the Tartars and the expulsion of the Christians from Syria, so that his reign was one of constant war and enormous activity. William of Tripoli, in the work above mentioned, says: "Bondogar, as a soldier, was not inferior to Julius Caesar, nor in malignity to Nero." He admits, however, that the Sultan was sober, chaste, just to his own people, and even kind to his Christian subjects; whilst Makrizi calls him one of the best princes that ever reigned over Muslims. Yet if we take Bibars as painted by this admiring historian and by other Arabic documents, the second of Friar William's comparisons is justified, for he seems almost a Devil in malignity as well as in activity. More than once he played tennis at Damascus and Cairo within the same week. A strange sample of the man is the letter which he wrote

to Boemond, Prince of Antioch and Tripoli, to announce to him the capture of the former city. After an ironically polite address to Boemond as having by the loss of his great city had his title changed from Prince-ship (*Al-Brensiyah*) to Countship (*Al-Komasiyah*), and describing his own devastations round Tripoli, he comes to the attack of Antioch: "We carried the place, sword in hand, at the 4th hour of Saturday, the 4th day of Ramadhán. . . . Hadst thou but seen thy Knights trodden under the hoofs of the horses! thy palaces invaded by plunderers and ransacked for booty! thy treasures weighed out by the hundredweight! thy ladies (*Dímátaka*, 'tes DAMES') bought and sold with thine own gear, at four for a dinár! hadst thou but seen thy churches demolished, thy crosses sawn in sunder, thy garbled Gospels hawked about before the sun, the tombs of thy nobles cast to the ground; thy foe the Moslem treading thy Holy of Holies; the monk, the priest, the deacon slaughtered on the Altar; the rich given up to misery; princes of royal blood reduced to slavery! Couldst thou but have seen the flames devouring thy halls; thy dead cast into the fires temporal with the fires eternal hard at hand; the churches of Paul and of Cosmas rocking and going down——, then wouldst thou have said, 'Would God that I were dust!' . . . . As not a man hath escaped to tell thee the tale, I TELL IT THEE!"

(*Quatremère's Makrizi*, II. 92-101, and 190 *seqq.*; *D'Olhsson*, III. 459-474; *Marino Sanuto* in Bongars, 224-226, &c., &c.)

NOTE 4.—The ruling Master of the Temple was Thomas Berard, but there is little detail about the Order in the East at this time. They had however considerable possessions and great influence in Cilician Armenia, and how much they were mixed up in its affairs is shown by a circumstance related by Makrizi. In 1285, when Sultan Mansur, the successor of Bundúkdár, was besieging the Castle of Markab, there arrived in Camp the Commander of the Temple (*Kamandár-ul Drowet*) of the Country of Armenia, charged to negotiate on the part of the king of Sis (*i.e.* of Lesser Armenia), and bringing presents from him and from the Master of the Temple, Berard's successor William de Beaujeu. (III. 201.)

## CHAPTER XIII.

HOW MESSER NICOLAS AND MESSER MAFFEO POLO, ACCOMPANIED BY MARK, TRAVELLED TO THE COURT OF THE GREAT KAAN.

So the Two Brothers, and Mark along with them, proceeded on their way, and journeying on, summer and winter, came at length to the Great Kaan, who was then at a certain rich

and great city, called KEMENFU.<sup>1</sup> As to what they met with on the road, whether in going or coming, we shall give no particulars at present, because we are going to tell you all those details in regular order in the after part of this Book. Their journey back to the Kaan occupied a good three years and a half, owing to the bad weather and severe cold that they encountered. And let me tell you in good sooth that when the Great Kaan heard that Messers Nicolas and Maffeo Polo were on their way back, he sent people a journey of full 40 days to meet them; and on this journey, as on their former one, they were honourably entertained upon the road, and supplied with all that they required.

NOTE 1.—The French texts read *Clemenfu*, Ramusio *Clemenfu*. The Pucci MS. guides us to the correct reading, having *Chemensu* (*Kemensu*) for *Clemenfu*. KAIMINGU, meaning something like "City of Peace," and called by Rashiduddin *Kaiminfu* (whereby we see that Polo as usual adopted the Persian form of the name) was a city founded in 1256, four years before Kublai's accession, some distance to the north of the Chinese wall. It became Kublai's favourite summer residence, and was styled from 1264 *Shangtu* or "Upper Court" (see *infra*, Book I. chap. xi.). It was known to the Mongols, apparently by a combination of the two names, as *Shangdu Keitun*. It appears in the maps, since D'Anville's, under the modern name of *Djao-Naiman Sumé*, the Tolonúr of Père Huc, and according to Kiepert's *Asia* is about 180 miles in a direct line north of Peking.

(See *Klaproth in J. As.* XI. 365; *Gaubil*, p. 115; *Cathay*, p. 260.)

## CHAPTER XIV.

HOW MESSER NICOLO AND MESSER MAFFEO POLO AND MARCO  
PRESENTED THEMSELVES BEFORE THE GREAT KAAH.

AND what shall I tell you? when the Two Brothers and Mark had arrived at that great city, they went to the Imperial Palace, and there they found the Sovereign attended by a great company of Barons. So they bent the knee before

him, and paid their respects to him with all possible reverence [prostrating themselves on the ground]. Then the Lord bade them stand up, and treated them with great honour, showing great pleasure at their coming, and asked many questions as to their welfare, and how they had sped. They replied that they had in verity sped well, seeing that they found the Kaan well and safe. Then they presented the credentials and letters which they had received from the Pope, which pleased him right well; and after that they he produced the Oil from the Sepulchre, and at that also was very glad, for he set great store thereby. And next, spying Mark, who was then a young gallant, he asked who was that in their company? "Sire," said his father, Messer Nicolo, "'tis my son and your liegeman."<sup>1</sup> "Welcome is he too," quoth the Emperor. And why should I make a long story? There was great rejoicing at the Court because of their arrival; and they met with attention and honour from everybody. So there they abode at the Court with the other Barons.

NOTE 1.—"Joenne Bachelor."

NOTE 2.—"Sire, *il est mon filz et vostre homme*." The last word in the sense which gives us the word *homage*. Thus in the miracle play of Theophilus (13th century), the Devil says to Theophilus:—

"Or joing  
Tes mains et si devien *mes hom*.  
*Theoph.* Vez-ci que je vous faz *homage*."

So *infra* (Book I. ch. xlvii.) Ung Khan is made to say of Chinghiz: "*Il est mon homes et mon serf*." (See also Bk. II. ch. iv. note). St. Lewis said of the peace he had made with Henry III: "*Il m'est mout grant honneur en la paix que je foiz au Roy d'Angleterre pour ce qu'il est mon home*, ce que n'estoit pas devant." And Joinville says with regard to the king, "*Je ne woz faire point de serement, car je n'estoie pas son home*" (being a vassal of Champagne). (*Théâtre Français au Moyen Age*, p. 145; Joinville, p. 21, 37.)

## CHAPTER XV.

### HOW THE LORD SENT MARK ON AN EMBASSY OF HIS.

Now it came to pass that Marco, the son of Messer Nicolo, sped wondrously in learning the customs of the Tartars, as well as their language, their manner of writing, and their practice of war; in fact he came in brief space to know several languages, and four sundry written characters. And he was discreet and prudent in every way, insomuch that the Emperor held him in great esteem.<sup>1</sup> And so when he discerned Mark to have so much sense, and to conduct himself so well and becomingly, he sent him on an embassy of his, to a country which was a good six months' journey distant. The young gallant executed his commission well and with discretion. Now he had taken note on several occasions that when the Prince's ambassadors returned from different parts of the world, they were able to tell him about nothing except the business on which they had gone, and that the Prince in consequence held them for no better than fools and dolts, and would say: "I had far liever hearken about the strange things, and the manners of the different countries you have seen, than merely be told of the business you went upon;"—for he took great delight in hearing of the affairs of strange countries. Mark therefore, as he went and returned, took great pains to learn about all kinds of different matters in the countries which he visited, in order to be able to tell about them to the Great Kaan.<sup>2</sup>

NOTE 1.—The word *Seigneur* is often rendered "Emperor," as Lord is equivocal.

What the four characters acquired by Marco were is open to indefinite discussion.

The Chronicle of the Mongol Emperors rendered by Gaubil mentions as characters used in their Empire, the Uighur, the Persian and Arabic, that of the Lamas (Tibetan); that of the Nyuché, introduced by the Kin Dynasty (of which some account by Mr. Wylie will be found in the



*Jour. R. As. Soc.* XVII. p. 331), the Khitan, and the Passepa or Baspa character, a syllabic character arranged on the basis of the Tibetan and Sanskrit letters chiefly, by a learned chief Lama so-called, under the orders of Kublai; and established by edict in 1269, as the official character. The Nyuché and Khitan were apparently imitations of Chinese writing.

Chinghiz and his first successors used the Uighur, and sometimes the Chinese character.

On a remarkable Buddhist monument of the age of the Mongol rule in China, at the pass of Nankau, 42 miles from Peking, there is a long invocation inscribed in the Chinese, Nyuché, Sanskrit, Uighur, Tibetan, and Baspa Mongol characters. I hope to present a specimen of this.

The orders of the Great Kaan are stated to have been published habitually in six languages, viz., Mongol, Uighur (a branch of Oriental Turkish), Arabic, Persian, Tangutan (probably Tibetan or a dialect thereof) and Chinese.

Ghazan Khan of Persia is said to have understood Mongol, Arabic, Persian, something of Kashmîrî, of Tibetan, of Chinese, and a little of the *Frank* tongue (probably French).

The annals of the Ming Dynasty, which succeeded the Mongols in China, mention the establishment in 1407 of a linguistic office for diplomatic purposes. The languages to be studied were Nyuché, Mongol, Tibetan, Sanskrit, Bokharan (Persian?), Uighur, Burmese, and Siamese. To these were added by the Manchu dynasty two languages called *Papeh* and *Pehyih*, both Shan dialects of the S.W. frontier—see *infra*, Bk. II. ch. lvi.-lvii., and notes. (*Gaubil*, p. 148; *Gold. Horde*, 184; *Ilchan*. II. 147; *Lockhart* in *J. R. G. S.*, XXXVI. 152; *Koeppen*, *Buddhismus*, II. 99.)

Marsden supposes Mark's four acquisitions to have been *Mongol*, *Uighur*, *Manchu*, and *Chinese*; Baldello, *Mongol*, *Arabic*, *Turkish*, and *Chinese*; Pauthier, *Baspa Mongol*, *Arabic*, *Uighur*, and *Chinese*. I entirely reject the Chinese. We shall see no reason to believe that he knew either language or character. Pauthier's other three seem highly probable. The fourth may have been Tangutan or Tibetan. But it is likely enough that he counted separately two varieties of the same character (e.g. of the Arabic and Persian) as two "*lettres de leur escriptures*."

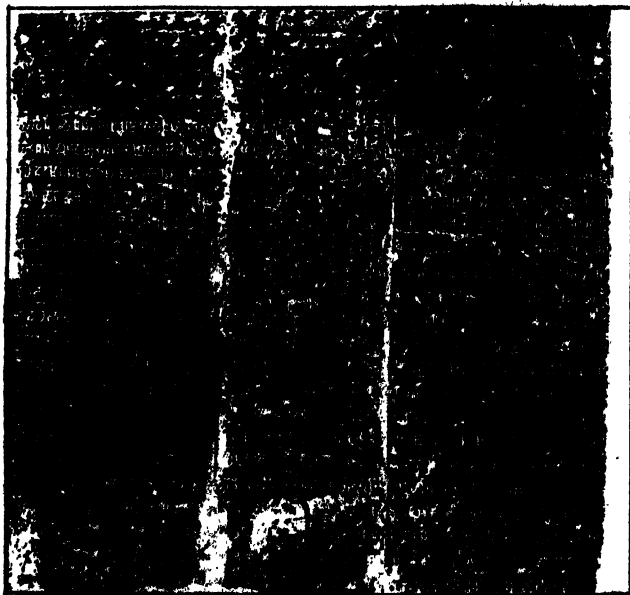
NOTE 2.—From the context no doubt Marco's employments were honourable and confidential; but *Commissioner* would perhaps better express them than Ambassador in the modern sense. The word *Ilchi*, which was probably in his mind, was applied to a large variety of classes employed on the Commissions of Government, as we may see from a passage of Rashiduddin in D'Ohsson, which says that "there were always to be found in every city from one to two hundred *Ilchis*, who forced the citizens to furnish them with free-quarters," &c. (III. 404, see also 485).



*Reduced. far-simile of  
Part of an Inscription of the Mongol era, in various characters, on the Archway at  
Hau-yung-twan, N.W. of Peking, from impressions taken by, and in the possession of W.A. Wyke.*

№ 1

BASPA MONGOL

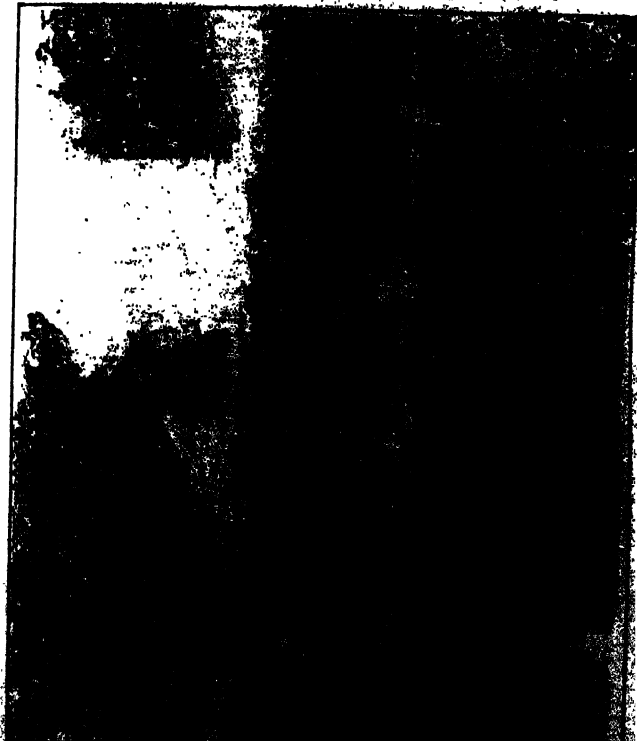


№ 2

UIGUR



N<sup>o</sup> 3  
NYUCHE



N<sup>o</sup> 4  
CHINESE



W. Gings Photo-Lith.

*N.B. The original Inscription is given in Sanscrit and Tibetan  
as well as in these four characters.*



## CHAPTER XVI.

HOW MARK RETURNED FROM THE MISSION WHEREON HE HAD BEEN SENT.

WHEN Mark returned from his embassy he presented himself before the Emperor, and after making his report of the business with which he was charged, and its successful accomplishment, he went on to give an account in a pleasant and intelligent manner of all the novelties and strange things that he had seen and heard; insomuch that the Emperor and all such as heard his story were surprised, and said: "If this young man live, he will assuredly come to be a person of great worth and ability." And so from that time forward he was always entitled MESSER MARCO POLO, and thus we shall style him henceforth in this Book of ours, as is but right.

Thereafter Messer Marco abode in the Kaan's employment some 17 years, continually going and coming, hither and thither, on the missions that were entrusted to him by the Lord [and sometimes, with the permission and authority of the Great Kaan, on his own private affairs]. And, as he knew all the Sovereign's ways, like a sensible man he always took much pains to gather knowledge of anything that would be likely to interest him, and then on his return to Court he would relate everything in regular order, and thus the Emperor came to hold him in great love and favour. And for this reason also he would employ him the oftener on the most weighty and most distant of his missions. These Messer Marco ever carried out with discretion and success, God be thanked. So the Emperor became ever more partial to him, and treated him with the greater distinction, and kept him so close to his person that some of the Barons waxed very envious thereof. And thus it came about that Messer Marco Polo had knowledge of, or had actually visited, a greater number of the different countries of the World than any other man;

the more that he was always giving his mind to get knowledge, and to spy out and enquire into everything, in order to have matter to relate to the Lord.

## CHAPTER XVII.

HOW MESSER NICOLO, MESSER MAFFEO, AND MESSER MARCO, ASKED  
LEAVE OF THE GREAT KAAH TO GO THEIR WAY.

WHEN the Two Brothers and Mark had abode with the Lord all that time that you have been told [having meanwhile acquired great wealth in jewels and gold], they began among themselves to have thoughts about returning to their own country; and indeed it was time. [For, to say nothing of the length and infinite perils of the way, when they considered the Kaan's great age, they doubted whether, in the event of his death before their departure, they would ever be able to get home.] They applied to him several times for leave to go, presenting their request with great respect, but he had such a partiality for them, and liked so much to have them about him, that nothing on earth would persuade him to let them go.

Now it came to pass in those days, that the Queen BOLGANA, wife of ARGON Lord of the Levant, departed this life. And in her Will she had desired that no Lady should take her place, or succeed her as Argon's wife, except one of her own family [which existed in Cathay]. Argon therefore despatched three of his Barons, by name respectively OULATAY, APUSCA, and COJA, as ambassadors to the Great Kaan, attended by a very gallant company, in order to bring back as his bride a lady of the family of Queen Bolgana his late wife.<sup>1</sup>

When these three Barons had reached the Court of the Great Kaan, they delivered their message explaining wherefore they were come. The Kaan received them with all

honour and hospitality, and then sent for a lady whose name was COCACHIN, who was of the family of the deceased Queen Bolgana. She was a maiden of 17, a very beautiful and charming person, and on her arrival at Court she was presented to the three Barons as the Lady chosen in compliance with their demand. They declared that the Lady pleased them well.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile, Messer Marco chanced to return from India, whither he had gone as the Lord's ambassador, and made his report of all the different things that he had seen in his travels, and of the sundry seas over which he had voyaged. And the three Barons, having seen that Messer Nicolo, Messer Maffeo, and Messer Marco were not only Latins, but men of marvellous good sense withal, took thought among themselves to get the three to travel with them, their intention being to return to their country by sea, on account of the great fatigue of that long land journey for a lady. And the ambassadors were the more desirous to have their company, as being aware that those three had great knowledge and experience of the Indian Sea and the countries by which they would have to pass, and especially Messer Marco. So they went to the Great Kaan, and begged as a favour that he would send the three Latins with them, as it was their desire to return home by sea.

The Lord, having that great regard that I have mentioned for those three Latins, was very loath to do so [and his countenance showed great dissatisfaction]. But at last he did give them permission to depart, enjoining them to accompany the three Barons and the Lady.

NOTE 1.—Pegolotti, in his chapters on mercantile ventures to Cathay, refers to the dangers to which foreigners were always liable on the death of the reigning sovereign. (See *Cathay*, p. 292.)

NOTE 2.—Several ladies of the name of BULUGHAN ("Zibellina") have a place in Mongol-Persian history. The one here indicated, a Lady of



great beauty and ability, was known as the *Great Khâtûn* (or Lady) Bulughan, and was (according to strange Mongol custom) successively the wife of Abaka and of his son ARGHÛN, the Argon of the text, Mongol sovereign of Persia. She died on the banks of the Kur in Georgia, 7th April, 1286. She belonged to the Mongol tribe of Bayaut, and was the daughter of Hulákú's Chief Secretary Gúgah. (*Ilchan*. I. 374 et passim; *Erdmann's Temudschin*, p. 216.)

The names of the Envoys, ULADAI, APUSHKA, and KOJA, are all names met with in Mongol history. And Rashiduddin speaks of an Apushka of the Mongol Tribe of Urnaut, who on some occasion was sent as Envoy to the Great Kaan from Persia, <sup>1</sup>—possibly the very person (see *Erdmann*, 205).

Of the Lady Cocachin we shall speak below.

NOTE 3.—Ramusio here has the following passage, genuine no doubt: "So everything being ready, with a great escort to do honour to the bride of King Argon, the Ambassadors took leave and set forth. But after travelling eight months by the same way that they had come, they found the roads closed, in consequence of wars lately broken out among certain Tartar Princes; so being unable to proceed, they were compelled to return to the Court of the Great Kaan."

## CHAPTER XVIII.

HOW THE TWO BROTHERS AND MESSER MARCO TOOK LEAVE OF THE GREAT KAAH, AND RETURNED TO THEIR OWN COUNTRY.

AND when the Prince saw that the Two Brothers and Messer Marco were ready to set forth, he called them all three to his presence, and gave them two golden Tablets of Authority, which should secure them liberty of passage through all his dominions, and by means of which, whithersoever they should go, all necessities would be provided for them, and for all their company, and whatever they might choose to order.<sup>1</sup> He charged them also with messages to the King of France, the King of England,<sup>2</sup> the King of Spain, and the other kings of Christendom. He then caused thirteen ships to be equipt, each of which had four masts, and often spread twelve sails.<sup>3</sup> And I could easily give you all particulars about these, but as it would be so long an

affair I will not enter upon this now, but hereafter, when time and place are suitable. [Among the said ships were at least four or five that carried crews of 250 or 260 men.]

And when the ships had been equipt, the Three Barons and the Lady, and the Two Brothers and Messer Marco, took leave of the Grand Kaan, and went on board their ships with a great company of people, and with all necessaries provided for two years by the Emperor. They put forth to sea, and after sailing for some three months they arrived at a certain Island towards the South, which is called JAVA,<sup>4</sup> and in which there are many wonderful things which we shall tell you all about by and bye. Quitting this Island they continued to navigate the Sea of India for 18 months more before they arrived whither they were bound, meeting on their way also with many marvels of which we shall tell hereafter.

And when they got thither they found that Argon was dead, so the Lady was delivered to CASAN, his son.

But I should have told you that it is a fact that, when they embarked, they were in number some 600 persons, without counting the mariners: but nearly all died by the way, so that only eight survived.<sup>5</sup>

The sovereignty when they arrived was held by KIIACATU, so they commended the Lady to him, and executed all their commission. And when the Two Brothers and Messer Marco had executed their charge in full, and done all that the Great Kaan had enjoined on them in regard to the Lady, they took their leave and set out upon their journey.<sup>6</sup> And before their departure, Kiacatu gave them four golden tablets of authority, two of which bore gerfalcons, one bore lions, whilst the fourth was plain, and having on them inscriptions which directed that the three Ambassadors should receive honour and service all

through the land as if rendered to the Prince in person, and that horses and all provisions, and everything necessary, should be supplied to them. And so they found in fact; for throughout the country they received ample and excellent supplies of everything needful; and many a time, indeed, as I may tell you, they were furnished with 200 horsemen, more or less, to escort them on their way in safety. And this was all the more needful because Kiacatu was not the legitimate Lord;<sup>5</sup> and therefore the people had less scruple to do mischief than if they had had a lawful prince.<sup>7</sup>

Another thing too must be mentioned, which does credit to those three Ambassadors, and shows for what great personages they were held. The Great Kaan regarded them with such trust and affection, that he had confided to their charge the Queen Cocachin, as well as the daughter of the King of Manzi,<sup>8</sup> to conduct to Argon the Lord of all the Levant. And those two great ladies who were thus entrusted to them they watched over and guarded as if they had been daughters of their own, until they had transferred them to the hands of their Lord; whilst the ladies, young and fair as they were, looked on each of those three as a father, and obeyed them accordingly. Indeed, both Casan, who is now the reigning prince, and the Queen Cocachin his wife, have such a regard for the Envoys that there is nothing they would not do for them. And when the three Ambassadors took leave of that Lady to return to their own country, she wept for sorrow at the parting.

What more shall I say? Having left Kiacatu they travelled day by day till they came to Trebizond, and thence to Constantinople, from Constantinople to Negropont, and from Negropont to Venice. And this was in the year 1295 of Christ's Incarnation.

And now that I have rehearsed all the Prologue as you have heard, we shall begin the Book of the Description

## of the Divers Things that Messer Marco met with in his Travels.

NOTE 1.—On these plates or tablets, which have already been spoken of, a note will be found further on (Book II. chap. vii.). Plano Carpini says of the Mongol practice in reference to royal messengers: “Nuncios, quoscunque et quocunque, et ubicunque transmittit, oportet quod dent eis sine morâ equos subductitios et expensas” (669).

NOTE 2.—The mention of the King of England appears for the first time in Pauthier's Text. Probably we shall never know if the communication reached him. But we have the record of several embassies in preceding and subsequent years from the Mongol Khans of Persia to the Kings of England; all with the view of obtaining co-operation in attack on the Egyptian Sultan. Such messages came from Abaka in 1277; from Arghun in 1289 and 1291; from Ghazan in 1302; from Oljaitu in 1307 (see *Résumé* in *Mém. de l'Acad.* VII.).

NOTE 3.—Ramusio has “nine sails.” Marsden thinks even this lower number an error of Ramusio's, as “it is well known that Chinese vessels do not carry any kind of topsail.” This is, however, a mistake, for they do sometimes carry a small topsail of cotton cloth (and formerly, it would seem from Lecomte, even a topgallant sail at times), though only in quiet weather. And the evidence as to the number of sails carried by the great Chinese junks of the Middle Ages, which evidently made a great impression on Western foreigners, is irresistible. Friar Jordanus, who saw them in Malabar, says, “With a fair wind they carry ten sails;” Ibn Batuta, “One of these great junks carries from three sails to twelve;” Joseph, the Indian, speaking of those that traded to India in the 15th century, “They were very great, and had sometimes twelve sails with innumerable rowers” (*Lecomte*, I. 389; *Fr. Jordanus*, Hak. Soc. p. 55; *Ibn Batuta*, IV. 91; *Nervus Orbis*, p. 148). A fuller account of these vessels is given at the beginning of Book III.

NOTE 4.—*i.e.* in this case Sumatra, as will appear hereafter. “It is quite possible for a fleet of fourteen junks which required to keep together to take three months at the present time to accomplish a similar voyage. A Chinese trader, who has come annually to Singapore in junks for many years, tells us that he has had as long a passage as sixty days, although the average is eighteen or twenty days” (*Logan* in *J. Ind. Archip.* II. 609).

NOTE 5.—Ramusio's version here varies widely, and looks more probable: “From the day that they embarked until their arrival there died of mariners and others on board 600 persons; and of the three ambassadors only one survived, whose name was Coza (*Coja*); but of the ladies and damsels died but one.”

It is worth noting that in the case of an embassy sent to Cathay a few years later by Ghazan Khan, on the return by this same route to Persia, the chief of the two Persian ambassadors, and the Great Kaan's envoy, who was in company, both died by the way (see *Wassáf* in *Elliot*, III. 47).

NOTE 6.—Ramusio's version states that on learning Arghun's death (which they probably did on landing at Hormuz), they sent word of their arrival to Kiacatu, who directed them to conduct the lady to Casan, who was then in the region of the *Arbre Sec* (the Province of Khorasan) guarding the frontier passes with 60,000 men, and that they did so, and then turned back to Kiacatu (probably at Tabriz) and stayed at his Court nine months. Even the Geog. Text seems to imply that they had become personally known to Casan, and I have no doubt that Ramusio's statement is an authentic expansion of the original narrative by Marco himself, or on his authority.

Arghún Khan died 10th March, 1291. He was succeeded (23rd July) by his brother Kaikhátú (*Quiacatu* of Polo), who was put to death 24th March, 1295.

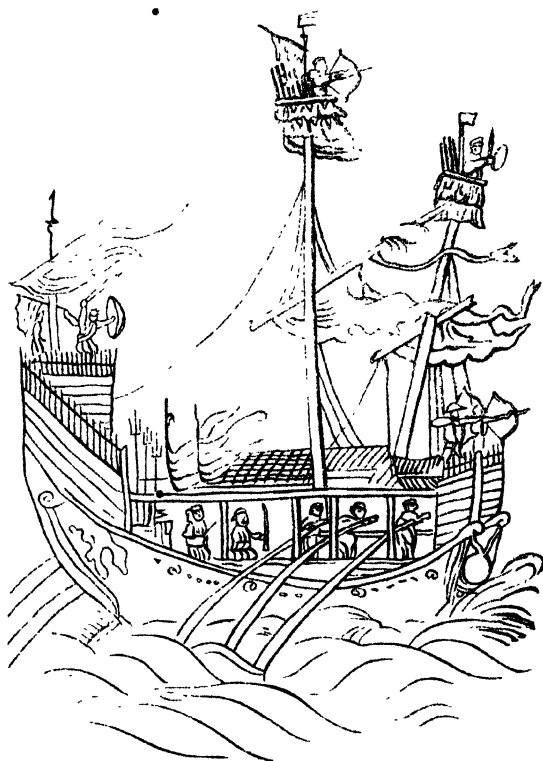
We learn from Hammer's History of the Ilkhans that when Gházán, the son of Arghun (*Casan* of Polo), who had the government of the Khorasan frontier, was on his return to his post from Tabriz, where his uncle Kaikhatu had refused to see him, "he met at Abher the ambassador whom he had sent to the Great Kaan to obtain in marriage a relative of the Great Lady Bulghan. This envoy brought with him the Lady KUKAJIN (our author's *Cocachin*), with presents from the Emperor, and the marriage was celebrated with due festivity." Abher lies a little west of Kazwin.

Hammer seems to be here copying from *Wassáf*, but I have not been able to procure a reference to that author. As well as the date can be made out from the History of the Ilkhans, Ghazan must have met his bride towards the end of 1293, or quite the beginning of 1294. Rashiduddin also mentions the fair lady from Cathay: "The *ordu* (or establishment) of Tukiti Khatun was given to KUKAJI KHATUN, who had been brought from the Kaan's Court, and who was a kinswoman of the late chief Queen Bulghán. Kukaji, the wife of the Padshah of Islam, Ghazan Khan, died in the month of Shaban, 695," i.e. in June 1296, so that the poor girl did not long survive her promotion (see *Hammer's Ilkh.* II. 20, and 8, and I. 273; and *Quatremère's Rashiduddin*, p. 97).

NOTE 7.—Here Ramusio's text says: "During this journey Messers Nicolo, Maffeo, and Marco heard the news that the Great Khan had departed this life; and this caused them to give up all hope of returning to those parts."

NOTE 8.—This Princess of Manzi, or Southern China, is mentioned only in the Geog. Text and in the Crusca which is based thereon. I find no notice of her among the wives of Ghazan or otherwise.

On the fall of the capital of the Sung Dynasty—the Kinsay of Polo—in 1276, the Princesses of that Imperial family were sent to Peking, and were graciously treated by Kublai's favourite Queen, the Lady Jamui. This young lady was, no doubt, one of those captive princesses who had been brought up at the Court of Khanbalig (see *Demailla*, IX. 376, and *infra* Book II. ch. lxx., note).



Ancient Chinese War Vessel.



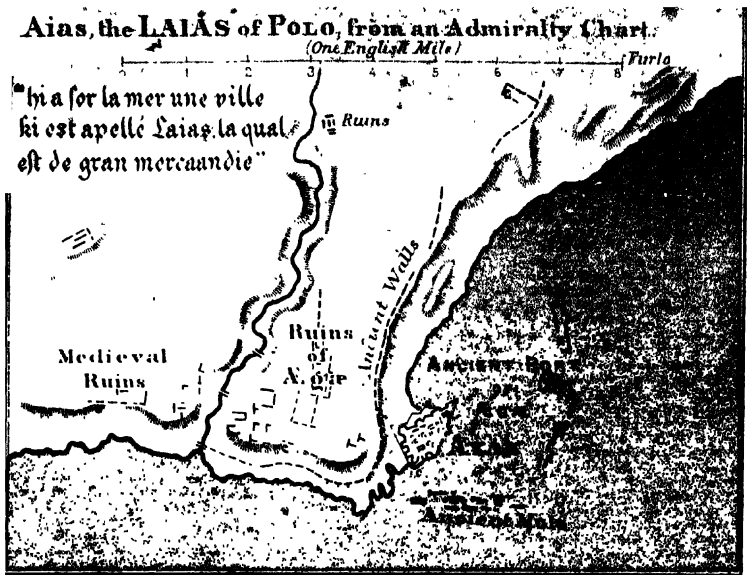
## BOOK FIRST

ACCOUNT OF REGIONS VISITED OR HEARD OF  
ON THE JOURNEY FROM THE LESSER ARMENIA  
TO THE COURT OF THE GREAT KAAK AT  
CHANDU.

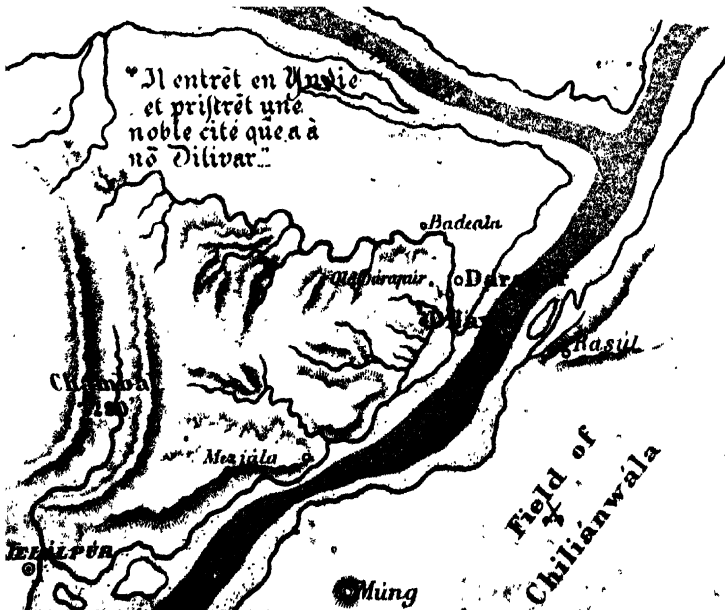








Book I. ch. 18.  
**Position of Dilāwar, the supposed Site of POLO'S DILAVAR**  
*Scale of 3 Miles to One Inch.*



## BOOK I

### CHAPTER I.

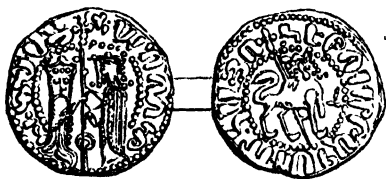
HERE THE BOOK BEGINS; AND FIRST IT SPEAKS OF THE LESSER HERMENIA.

THERE are two Hermenias, the Greater and the Less. The Lesser Hermenia is governed by a certain King, who maintains a just rule in his dominions, but is himself subject to the Tartar.<sup>1</sup> The country contains numerous towns and villages,<sup>2</sup> and has everything in plenty; moreover, it is a great country for sport in the chase of all manner of beasts and birds. It is, however, by no means a healthy region, but grievously the reverse.<sup>3</sup> In days of old the nobles there were valiant men, and did doughty deeds of arms; but now-a-days they are poor creatures, and good at nought, unless it be at boozing; they are great at that. Howbeit, they have a city upon the sea, which is called LAYAS, at which there is a great trade. For you must know that all the spicery, and the cloths of silk and gold, and the other valuable wares that come from the interior, are brought to that city. And the merchants of Venice and Genoa, and other countries, come thither to sell their goods, and to buy what they lack. And whatsoever persons would travel to the interior (of the East), merchants or others, they take their way by this city of Layas.<sup>4</sup>

Having now told you about the Lesser Hermenia we shall next tell you about Turcomania.

the latter applied to the western portion of Armenia, west of the Euphrates, and immediately north of Cappadocia.

But when the old Armenian monarchy was broken up (1079-80), Rupen, a kinsman of the Bagratid Kings, with many of his countrymen, took refuge in the Taurus. His first descendants ruled as *barons*, a title adopted apparently from the Crusaders, but still preserved in Armenia. Leon, the great-great-grandson of Rupen, was consecrated King under the supremacy of the Pope and the Western Empire in 1198.



Coin of King Hetum and his Queen Isabel.

The kingdom was at its zenith under Hetum or Hayton I., husband of Leon's daughter Isabel (1224-1269); he was, however, prudent enough to make an early submission to the Mongols, and remained ever staunch to them, which brought his territory constantly under the flail of Egypt.

It included at one time all Cilicia, with many cities of Syria and the ancient Armenia Minor, of Isauria and Cappadocia. The male line of Rupen becoming extinct in 1342, the kingdom passed to John de Lusignan, of the royal house of Cyprus, and in 1375 it was put an end to by the Sultan of Egypt. Leon VI., the ex-king, into whose mouth Froissart puts some extraordinary geography, had a pension of 1000*l.* a year granted him by Richard II., and died at Paris in 1398.

The chief remaining vestige of this little monarchy is the continued existence of a *Catholicos* of part of the Armenian Church at Sis, which was the royal residence. Some Armenian communities still remain both in hills and plains; and the former, the more independent and industrious, still speak a corrupt Armenian.

Polo's contemporary, Marino Sanuto, compares the kingdom of the Pope's faithful Armenians to one between the teeth of four fierce beasts, the *Lion* Tartar, the *Panther* Soldan, the Turkish *Wolf*, the Corsair *Serpent*.

(*Dulaurier*, in *J. As.* ser. 5, tom. xvii.; *St. Martin*, *Arm.*; *Mar. San.* p. 32; *Froissart*, Book II. ch. xxii. *seqq.*; *Langlois*, *V. en Cilicie*, 1861, p. 19.)

NOTE 2.—“*Maintes villes et maint chasteaux.*” This is a constantly recurring phrase, and I have generally translated it as here, believing *chasteaux* (*castelli*) to be used in the frequent old Italian sense of a walled village or small walled town. Martini, in his *Atlas Sinensis*, uses “*Urbes, oppida, castella*,” to indicate the three classes of Chinese administrative cities.

NOTE 3.—“*Enferme durement.*” So Marino Sanuto objects to Lesser Armenia as a place of debarkation for a crusade, “*quia terra est infirma.*” Langlois, speaking of the Cilician plain: “In this region

once so fair, now covered with swamps and brambles, fever decimates a population which is yearly diminishing, has nothing to oppose to the scourge but incurable apathy, and will end by disappearing altogether," &c. (*Voyage*, p. 65.) Cilician Armenia retains its reputation for sport, and is much frequented by our naval officers for that object.

NOTE 4.—The phrase twice used in this passage for the *Interior* is *Fra terre*, an Italianism (*Fra terra*, or, as it stands in the Geog. Latin "*infra terram Orientis*"), which, however, Murray and Pauthier have read as an allusion to the *Euphrates*; an error based apparently on a marginal gloss in the published edition of the Soc. de Géographie. It is true that the province of Comagene under the Greek Empire got the name of *Euphratesia*, or in Arabic *Furāṭiyah*, but that was not in question here. The great trade of Ayes was with Tabriz *via* Sivas, Erzingan, and Erzurum, as we see in Pegolotti. Elsewhere, too, in Polo we find the phrase *fra terre* used where Euphrates could possibly have no concern, as in relation to India and Oman (see Book III. chs. xxix. and xxxviii., and notes in each case).

With regard to the phrase *spicery* here and elsewhere, it should be noted that the Italian *specerie* included a vast deal more than ginger and other "things hot to the mouth." In one of Pegolotti's lists of *specerie* we find drugs, dye-stuffs, metals, wax, cotton, &c.

## CHAPTER II.

### CONCERNING THE PROVINCE OF TURCOMANIA.

IN Turcomania there are three classes of people. First, there are the Turcomans; these are worshippers of Mahomet, a rude people with an uncouth language of their own.<sup>1</sup> They dwell among mountains and downs where they find good pasture, for their occupation is cattle-keeping. Excellent horses, known as *Turquans*, are reared in their country, and also very valuable mules. The other two classes are the Armenians and the Greeks, who live mixt with the former in the towns and villages, occupying themselves with trade and handicrafts. They weave the finest and handsomest carpets in the world, and also a great quantity of fine and rich silks of cramoisy and other colours,

and plenty of other stuffs. Their chief cities are CONIA, SAVAST [where the glorious Messer Saint Blaise suffered martyrdom], and CASARIA, besides many other towns and bishops' sees, of which we shall not speak at present, for it would be too long a matter. These people are subject to the Tartar of the Levant as their Suzerain.<sup>2</sup> We will now leave this province, and speak of the Greater Armenia.

NOTE 1.—Ricold of Montecroce, a contemporary of Polo, calls the Turkmans *homines bestiales*. In our day Ainsworth notes of a Turkman village: "The dogs were very ferocious . . . the people only a little better" (*J. R. G. S. X.* 292).

NOTE 2.—In Turcomania Marco perhaps embraces a great part of Asia Minor, but he especially means the territory of the decaying Seljukian monarchy, usually then called by Asiatics *Rûm*, as the Ottoman Empire is now, and the capital of which was Iconium, KUNFYAH, the Conia of the Text, and Coyne of Joinville. Ibn Batuta calls the whole country Turkey (*Al-Turkiyah*), and the people *Turkmân*; exactly likewise does Ricold (*Thurchia* and *Thurchimanni*). Hayton's account of the various classes of inhabitants is quite the same in substance as Polo's. The migratory and pastoral Turkmans still exist in this region, but the Kurds of like habits have taken their places to a large extent. The fine carpets and silk fabrics appear to be no longer produced here, any more than the excellent horses of which Polo speaks, which must have been the remains of the famous old breed of Cappadocia.

A grant of privileges to the Genoese by Leon II., king of Lesser Armenia, dated Dec. 23, 1288, alludes to the export of horses and mules, &c., from Ayas, and specifies the duties upon them. The horses now of repute in Asia as Turkman come from the east of the Caspian.

(*Pereg. Quat.* p. 114; *I. B.* II. 255 *seqq.*; *Hayton*, ch. xiii.; *Liber Jurum Reip. Januensis*, II. 184.)

Though the authors quoted above seem to make no distinction between Turks and Turkmans, that which we still understand does appear to have been made in the 12th century: "That there may be some distinction, at least in name, between those who made themselves a king, and thus achieved such glory, and those who still abide in their primitive barbarism and adhere to their old way of life, the former are now-a-days termed *Turks*, the latter by their old name of *Turcomans*" (*William of Tyre*, i. 7).

Casaria is KAISARİYA, the ancient Caesarea of Cappadocia, close to

the foot of the great Mount Argæus. *Savast* is the Armenian form (*Sevasd*) of Sebaste, the modern SIWAS. The three cities, Iconium, Caesarea, and Sebaste, were metropolitan sees under the Catholicos of Sis.

## CHAPTER III.

### DESCRIPTION OF THE GREATER HERMENIA.

THIS is a great country. It begins at a city called ARZINGA, at which they weave the best buckrams in the world. It possesses also the best baths from natural springs that are anywhere to be found.<sup>1</sup> The people of the country are Armenians, and are subject to the Tartar. There are many towns and villages in the country, but the noblest of their cities is Arzinga, which is the See of an Archbishop, and then ARZIRON and ARZIZI.<sup>2</sup>

The country is indeed a passing great one, and in the summer it is frequented by the whole host of the Tartars of the Levant, because it then furnishes them with such excellent pasture for their cattle. But in winter the cold is past all bounds, so in that season they quit this country and go to a warmer region, where they find other good pastures. [At a castle called PAIPURTH, that you pass in going from Trebizond to Tauris, there is a very good silver mine.<sup>3</sup>]

And you must know that it is in this country of Armenia that the Ark of Noah exists on the top of a certain great mountain [on the summit of which snow is so constant that no one can ascend;<sup>4</sup> for the snow never melts, and is constantly added to by new falls. Below, however, the snow does melt, and runs down, producing such rich and abundant herbage that in summer cattle are sent to pasture from a long way round about, and it never fails them. The melting snow also causes a great amount of mud on the mountain].



The country is bounded on the south by a kingdom called Mosul, the people of which are Jacobite and Nestorian Christians, of whom I shall have more to tell you presently. On the north it is bounded by the Land of the Georgians, of whom also I shall speak. On the confines towards Georgiania there is a fountain from which oil springs in great abundance, insomuch that a hundred shiploads might be taken from it at one time. This oil is not good to use with food, but 'tis good to burn, and is also used to anoint camels that have the mange. People come from vast distances to fetch it, for in all the countries round about they have no other oil.<sup>5</sup>

Now, having done with Great Armenia, we will tell you of Georgiania. \* .

NOTE 1.—ERZINGAN, an ancient Armenian city, and still a place of some prosperity for a town under Turkish rule. I do not find mention of its hot springs by modern travellers, but Lazari says Armenians assured him of their existence. There are plenty of others in Polo's route through the country, as at Ilija, close to Erzurum, and at Hassan Kala'a.

The *Buckrams* of Arzinga are mentioned both by Pegolotti (circa 1340) and by Giov. d'Uzzano (1442). But what were they?

Buckram in the modern sense is a coarse open texture of cotton or hemp, loaded with gum, and used to stiffen certain articles of dress. But this was certainly *not* the medieval sense. Nor is it easy to bring the medieval uses of the term under a single explanation. Indeed Mr. Marsh suggests that probably two different words have coalesced. Fr.-Michel says that *Bouqueran* was *at first* applied to a light cotton stuff of the nature of muslin, and *afterwards* to linen, but I do not see that he makes out this history of the application. Douet d'Arcq, in his *Comptes de l'Argenterie*, &c. explains the word simply in the modern sense, but there seems nothing in his text to bear this out.

A quotation in Raynouard's Romance Dictionary has "*Vestirs de polpra e de bisso que est bocaran*," where Raynouard renders *bisso* as *lin*; a quotation in Ducange also makes Buckram the equivalent of Bissus; and Michel quotes from an inventory of 1365, "*unam culcitram pinctam* (qu. punctam?) *albam factam de bisso aliter boquerant*."

Mr. Marsh again produces quotations, in which the word is used as a proverbial example of *whiteness*, and inclines to think that it was a bleached cloth with a lustrous surface.

It certainly was *not necessarily* linen. Giovanni Villani, in a passage

which is curious in more ways than one, tells how the citizens of Florence established rāces for their troops, and, among other prizes, was one which consisted of a *Bucherame di lambagine* (of cotton). Polo, near the end of the Book (Book III. ch. xxxiv.), speaking of Abyssinia, says, according to Pauthier's text: "*Et si y fait on moult beaux bouquerans et autres draps de coton.*" The G.T. is, indeed, more ambiguous: "*Il hi se font maint biaux dras banbacin e bocaran*" (cotton and buckram). When, however, he uses the same expression with reference to the delicate stuffs woven on the coast of Telingana, there can be no doubt that a cotton texture is meant, and apparently a fine muslin (see Book III. chap. xviii.). Buckram is generally named as an article of price, *chier bouquerant*, *ric boquerans*, &c., but not always, for Polo in one passage (Book II. ch. xlv.) seems to speak of it as the clothing of the poor people of Eastern Tibet.

Plano Carpini says the tunics of the Tartars were either of buckram (*bukeramus*), of *purpura* (a texture, perhaps velvet), or of *haudekin*, a cloth of gold (p. 614 15). When the envoys of the Old Man of the Mountain tried to bully Saint Lewis, one had a case of daggers to be offered in defiance, another a *bouqueran* for a winding sheet (*Joinville*, p. 136).

In accounts of materials for the use of Anne Boleyn in the time of her prosperity, *bukeram* frequently appears for "lying and tawnting" (?) gowns, lining sleeves, cloaks, a bed, &c., but it can scarcely have been for stiffening, as the colour of the buckram is generally specified as the same as that of the dress.

A number of passages seem to point to a quilted material. Boccaccio (Day viii. Nov. 10) speaks of a quilt (*coltre*) of the whitest buckram of Cyprus, and Uzzano enters Buckram Quilts (*coltre di Bucherame*) in a list of *Linajueli*, or linen-draperies. Both his handbook and Pegolotti's state repeatedly that buckrams were sold by the piece or the half-score pieces never by measure. In one of Michel's quotations (from *Baudouin de Sebourg*) we have:

"Gaufre li fist premiers amer d'un auqueton  
Qui fu de *boucherant* et *plaine de bon coton*."

Mr. Hewitt would appear to take the view that Buckram meant a quilted material; for, quoting from a roll of purchases made for the Court of Edward I., an entry for Ten Buckrams to make sleeves of, he remarks, "The sleeves appear to have been of *pourpointerie*," i.e. quilting (*Ancient Armour*, I. 240).

This signification would embrace a large number of passages in which the term is used, though certainly not all. It would account for the mode of sale by the piece, and frequent use of the expression *a* buckram, for its habitual application to *coltre* or counterpanes, its use in the *auqueton* of Baudouin, and in the jackets of Falstaff's "men in buckram," as well as its employment in the frocks of the Mongols and Tibetans. The

winter *chapkan*, or long tunic, of Upper India, a form of dress which, I believe, correctly represents that of the Mongol hosts, and is probably derived from them, is almost universally of quilted cotton. This signification would also facilitate the transfer of meaning to the substance now called buckram, for that is used as a *kind* of quilting.

The derivation of the word is very uncertain. Reiske says it is Arabic, *Abu-Kairdm*, "Pannus cum intextis figuris;" Wedgwood, attaching the modern meaning, that it is from It., *bucherare*, to pierce full of holes, which might be if *bucherare* could be used in the sense of *puntare*, or the French *piquer*; Marsh connects it with the *bucking* of linen; and D'Avezac thinks it was a stuff that took its name from *Bokhara*. If the name be local, as so many names of stuffs are, the French form rather suggests *Bulgaria*.

(*Della Decima*, III. 18, 140, 65, 74, 212, &c.; IV. 4, 5, 6, 212; *Reiske's* Notes to *Const. Porphyrogen.* II.; *D'Avezac*, p. 524; *Vocab. Univ. Ital.*; *Franc.-Michel, Recherches*, &c. II. 29 *seqq.*; *Philobiblon Soc. Miscell.* VI.; *Marsh's Wedgwood's Etym. Dict.* sub voce.)

NOTE 2.—Arziron is ERZRUM, which, even in Tournefort's time, the Franks called *Erzeron* (III. 126). Arzizi is ARJISH, on Lake Van, the ancient *Arsissa*, which gave the lake one of its names. It is now little more than a decayed castle, with a village inside.

Notices of Kuniyah, Kaisariya, Siwas, Arzan-ar-Rumi, Arzangan, and Arjish, will be found in Polo's contemporary Abulfeda (see *Büsching*, IV. 303-311).



Castle of Balburt.

NOTE 3.—Paipurth, or Baiburt, on the high road between Trebizond and Erzurum, was, according to Neumann, an Armenian fortress in the first century, and, according to Ritter, the castle *Baiberton* fortified by Justinian. It stands on a peninsular hill, encircled by the windings of the R. Charok. The Russians, in retiring from it in 1829, blew up the greater part of the defences. The nearest silver mines of which we find modern notice, are those of *Gumish-Khánah* ("Silverhouse") about 35 m. N.W. of Baiburt; they are more correctly mines of lead rich in silver, and were once largely worked. But the *Masálak-al-absár* (14th century), besides these, speaks of two others in the same province, one of which was near *Bajert*. This Quatremère reasonably would read *Babert* or Baiburt. (*Not. et Extraits*, XIII. i. 337; *Taxier, Armente*, I. 59.)

NOTE 4.—Josephus alludes to the belief that Noah's Ark still existed, and that pieces of the pitch were used as amulets. (*Ant.* I. 3. 6.)

Arrat (16,953 feet) was ascended, first by Prof. Pariot, Sept., 1829; by Spasski Aotonomoff, Aug., 1834; by Behrens, 1835; by Abich, 1845; by Seymour in 1848; by Khodzko, Khanikoff, and others, for trigonometrical and other scientific purposes, in August, 1850. It is characteristic of the account from which I take these notes (*Lougrimoff*, in *Bull. Soc. Geog. Paris*, ser. 4. tom. 1. p. 54) that whilst the writer's countrymen, Spasski and Behrens, were "moved by a noble curiosity," the Englishman is only admitted to have "gratified a tourist's whim!"

NOTE 5.—Though Mr. Khankoff points out that springs of naphtha are abundant in the vicinity of Fílis, the mention of *ship-loads* (in Ramusio indeed altered, but probably by the Editor, to *camel-loads*), and the vast quantities spoken of, point to the naphtha wells of the Baku Peninsula on the Caspian. Ricold speaks of their supplying the whole country as far as Baghdad, and Barbaro alludes to the practice of anointing camels with the oil. The quantity collected from the springs about Baku was in 1819 estimated at 241,000 *pecks* (nearly 4000 tons), the greater part of which went to Persia. (*Percq. Quat.* p. 122; *Ramusio*, II. 109; *El. de Laprim.* 276; *V. du Chev. Gamba*, I. 298.)

## CHAPTER IV.

### OF GEORGIANIA AND THE KINGS THEREOF.

IN GEORGIANIA there is a King called David Melic, which is as much as to say "David King;" he is subject to the Tartar.<sup>1</sup> In old times all the kings were born with the figure of an eagle upon the right shoulder. The people are very handsome, capital archers, and most valiant soldiers.

They are Christians of the Greek Rite, and have a fashion of wearing their hair cropped, like Churchmen.<sup>2</sup>

This is the country beyond which Alexander could not pass when he wished to penetrate to the region of the Ponent, because that the defile was so narrow and perilous, the sea lying on the one hand, and on the other lofty mountains impassable to horsemen. The strait extends like this for four leagues, and a handful of people might hold it against all the world. Alexander caused a very strong tower to be built there, to prevent the people beyond from passing to attack him, and this got the name of the IRON GATE. This is the place that the Book of Alexander speaks of, when it tells us how he shut up the Tartars between two mountains; not that they were really Tartars however, for there were no Tartars in those days, but they consisted of a race of people called COMANIANS and many besides.<sup>3</sup>

[In this province all the forests are of box-wood.<sup>4</sup>] There are numerous towns and villages, and silk is produced in great abundance. They also weave cloths of gold, and all kinds of very fine silk stuffs. The country produces the best goshawks in the world, [which are called *Avigi*].<sup>5</sup> It has indeed no lack of anything, and the people live by trade and handicrafts. 'Tis a very mountainous region, and full of strong defiles, insomuch that the Tartars have never been able to subdue it out and out.

There is in this country a certain Convent of Nuns called St. Leonard's, about which I have to tell you a very wonderful circumstance. Near the church in question there is a great lake at the foot of a mountain, and in this lake are found no fish great or small throughout the year till Lent come. On the first day of Lent they find in it the finest fish in the world, and great store too thereof; and these continue to be found till Easter Eve. After that they are found no more till Lent come round again; and so 'tis every year. 'Tis really a passing great miracle!<sup>6</sup>

That sea whereof I spoke as coming so near the mountains is called the Sea of GHEL or GHELAN, and extends about 700 miles.<sup>7</sup> It is twelve days' journey distant from any other sea, and into it flows the great River Euphrates and many others, whilst it is surrounded by mountains. Of late the merchants of Genoa have begun to navigate this sea, carrying ships across and launching them thereon. It is from the country on this sea also that the silk called *Ghellé* is brought.<sup>8</sup> [The said sea produces quantities of fish, especially sturgeon, at the river-mouths salmon, and other big kinds of fish.]

NOTE 1. --The G. T. says the King was *αλέξας* called David. The Georgian Kings of the family of Bagratidae claimed descent from King David through a prince Shumpath, said to have been sent north by Nebuchadnezzar; a descent which was usually asserted in their public documents. Timur's Institutes mention a suit of armour given him by the King of Georgia as forged by the hand of the Psalmist King. David is a very frequent name in their royal lists. There were two of that name who shared Georgia between them under the decision of the Great Kaan in 1246, and one of them, who survived to 1269, is probably meant here. The name of David was borne by the last titular King of Georgia, who ceded his rights to Russia in 1801. (*Khanikoff*; *Jour. As.* IX. 370, XL. 291, &c.; *Tim. Instit.* p. 143.)

NOTE 2. This fashion of tonsure is mentioned by Barbaro and Chardin. The latter speaks strongly of the beauty of both sexes, as does Della Valle, and most modern travellers concur.

NOTE 3. --This refers to the Pass of Derbend, still called in Turkish *Demir-Kâpi* or the Iron Gate, and to the ancient Wall that runs from the castle of Derbend along the ridges of Caucasus, called in the East *Sadd-i-Iskandar*, the Rampart of Alexander. Ruyer thinks the wall was probably built originally by one of the Antiochi, and renewed by the Sassanian Kobad or his son Naoshirwan. It is ascribed to the latter by Abulfeda; and according to Klaproth's extracts from the *Derbend-Nûmah*, Naoshirwan completed the fortress of Derbend in A.D. 542, but he and his father together had erected 360 towers upon the Caucasian Wall which extended to the Gate of the Alans (*i.e.* the Pass of Dariel). The Russians must have gained some knowledge as to the actual existence and extent of the remains of this great work, but I have not been able to meet with any modern information of a very precise kind. According to a quotation from *Reinegg's Caucasus* (I. 120, a

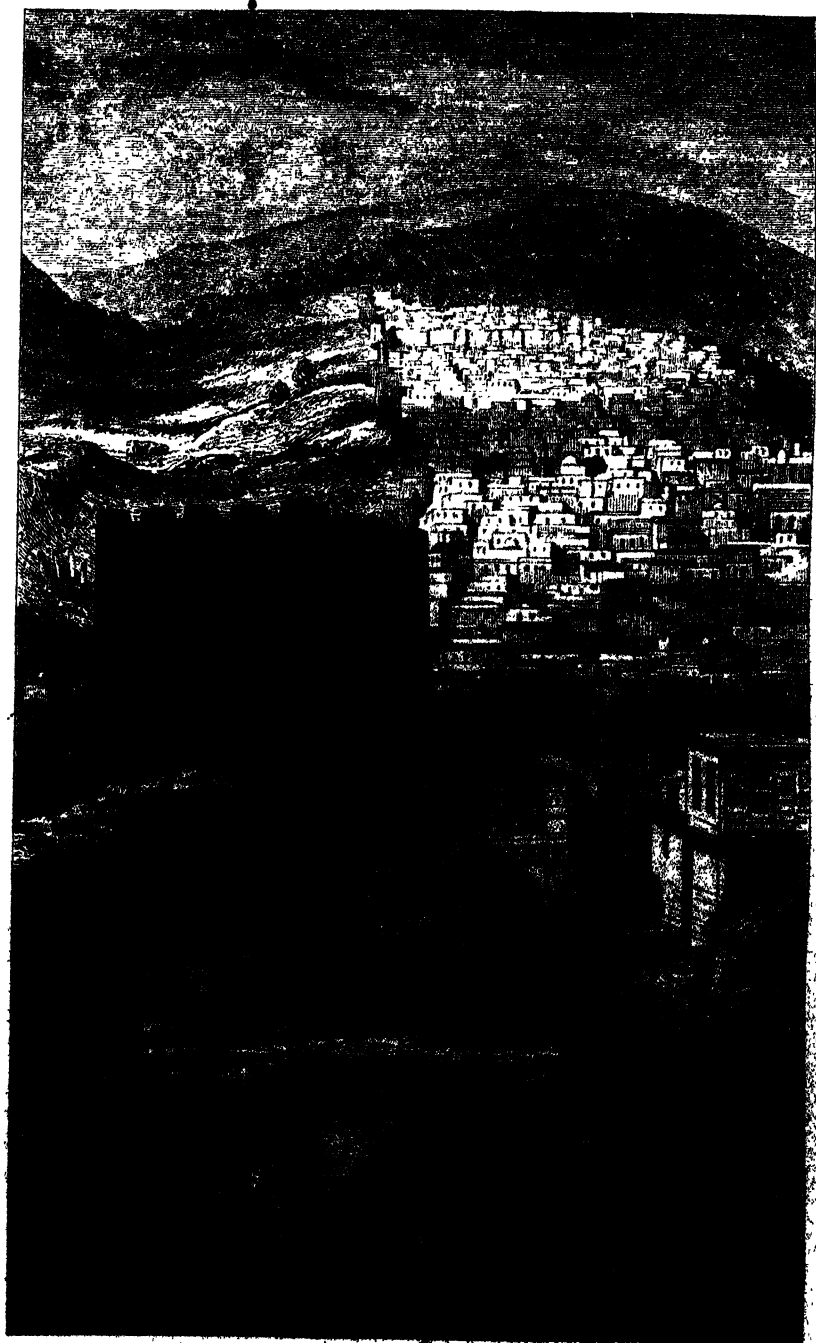
work which I have not been able to consult) the remains of defences can be traced for many miles, and are in some places as much as 120 feet high. M. Moynet indeed, in the *Tour du Monde* (I. 122), states that he traced the wall to a distance of 27 versts (18 miles) from Derbend, but unfortunately, instead of describing remains of such high interest from his own observation, he cites a description written by Alex. Dumas, which he says is quite accurate.

There is another wall claiming the title of *Sadd-i-Iskandar* at the S.E. angle of the Caspian. This has been particularly spoken of by Vámbéry, who followed its traces from S.W. to N.E. for upwards of 40 miles (see his *Travels in C. Asia*, 54 *seqq.*, and *Julius Braun* in the *Ausland*, No. 22, of 1869).

The story alluded to by Polo is found in the mediæval romances of Alexander, and in the Pseudo-Callisthenes on which they are founded. The hero chases a number of impure cannibal nations within a mountain barrier, and prays that they may be shut up therein. The mountains draw together within a few cubits, and Alexander then builds up the gorge and closes it with gates of brass or iron. There were in all 22 nations with their kings, and the names of the nations were Gôth, Magôth, Anugi, Egës, Exenach, &c. &c. Godfrey of Viterbo speaks of them in his rhyming verses :—

“ Finibus Indorum species fuit una virorum ;  
Goth erat atque Magoth dictum cognomen eorum  
\*       \*       \*       \*       \*  
Narrat Esaias, Isidorus et Apocalypsis,  
Tangit et in titulis Magna Sibylla suis.  
Patribus ipsorum tumulus fuit venter eorum,” &c. &c.

Among the questions that the Jews are said to have put, in order to test Mahommed's prophetic character, was one series : “ Who are Gog and Magog ? Where do they dwell ? What sort of rampart did Zu'l-karnain build between them and men ? ” And in the Koran we find (chap. xviii. “ *The Cavern* ”) : “ They will question thee, O Mohammed, regarding Zu'l-karnain. Reply : I will tell you his history ”—and then follows the story of the erection of the Rampart of Yajuj and Majuj. In chapter xxi. again there is an allusion to their expected issue at the latter day. This last expectation was one of very old date. Thus the *Cosmography* of Aethicus, a work believed to have been abridged by St. Jerome, and therefore to be as old at least as the 4th century, says that the *Turks* of the race of Gog and Magog, a polluted nation, eating human flesh and feeding on all abominations, never washing and never using wine, salt, nor wheat, shall come forth in the Day of Antichrist from where they lie shut up behind the Caspian Gates, and make horrid devastation. No wonder that the eruption of the Tartars was connected with this prophetic legend ! The Emperor Frederic II., writing to Henry III. of England, says of the Tartars : “ 'Tis said they are descended from the Ten Tribes who abandoned the Law of Moses and worshipped the



*View of Derbend.*



Golden Calf. They are the people whom Alexander Magnus shut up in the Caspian Mountains."

According to some chroniclers, the Emperor Heraclius had already let loose the Shut-up Nations to aid him against the Persians, but it brought him no good, for he was beaten in spite of their aid, and died of grief.

The theory that the Tartars were Gog and Magog led to the Rampart of Alexander being confounded with the Wall of China (see *infra*, Book I. chap. lix.), or being relegated to the extreme N.E. of Asia, as we find it in the Carta Catalana.

These legends are referred to by Rabbi Benjamin, Hayton, Rubricus, Ricold, Matthew Paris, and many more. Josephus indeed speaks of the Pass which Alexander fortified with gates of steel. But his saying that the King of Hyrcania was Lord of this pass points to the Hyrcanian Gates of Northern Persia, or perhaps to the Wall of Gomushkapah, described by Vámbéry.

Edrisi relates how the Khalif Wathek sent one Salem the Dragoman to explore the Rampart of Gog and Magog. His route lay by Tiflis, the Alan country, and that of the Bashkirds to the far north or north-east, and back by Samarkand. But the report of what he saw is pure fable.

At Gelath in Imeretia there still exists one valve of a large iron gate, traditionally said to be the relic of a pair brought as a trophy from Derbend by David King of Georgia, called the Restorer (1089-1130). M. Brosset however has shown it to be the gate of Ganja, carried off in 1139.

(Bayer in *Comment. Petropol.* I. 401 *seqq.*; *Pseudo-Callisth.* by Müller, p. 138; *Gott. Viterb. in Pistorii Nidani Scriptt. Germ.* II. 228; *Alexandriade*, p. 310-11; *Zotenberg's Tubari*, quoted in *Athenæum*, Jan. 18th, 1868; *Acad. des Insc. Divers Savans*, II. 483; *Edrisi*, II. 416-420, &c.)

NOTE 4.—The box-wood of the Abkhasian forests was so abundant, and formed so important an article of Genoese trade, as to give the name of *Chao de Bux* (Cavo di Bussi) to the bay of Bambor, N.W. of Sukum Kala'a, where the traffic was carried on (see *Elic de Laprim.* 243).

NOTE 5.—Jerome Cardan notices that "the best and biggest goshawks come from Armenia," a term often including Georgia and Caucasus. The name of the bird is perhaps the same as '*Affi*, "*Falco montanus*" (see *Casiri*, I. 320). Haxthausen in our own day speaks of the admirably-trained hawks of the Georgian princes. (*Cardan, de Rer. Varietate*, VII. 35; *Transcaucasia*, 25.)

NOTE 6.—A letter of Warren Hastings written shortly before his death, and after reading Marsden's Marco Polo, tells how a fish-breeder of Banbury warned him against putting pike into his fish-pond, saying, "If you should leave them where they are till Shrove Tuesday they will be sure to spawn, and then you will never get any other fish to breed in

it" (*Romance of Travel*, I. 255). Edward Webbe in his *Travels* (1590, reprinted 1868) tells us that in the "Land of Siria there is a River having great store of fish like unto Samon-trouts, but no Jew can catch them, though either Christian and Turk shall catch them in abundance with great ease." The circumstance of fish being got only for a limited time in spring is noticed with reference to Lake Van both by Tavernier and Mr. Brant.

But the exact legend here reported is related (as M. Pauthier has already noticed) by Wilibrand of Oldenburg of a stream under the castle of Adamodana belonging to the Hospitallers, near Naversa (the ancient *Anazarbus*), in Cilicia under Taurus. And Khanikoff was told the same story of a lake in the district of Akhaltziké in Western Georgia, in regard to which he explains the substance of the phenomenon as a result of the rise of the lake's level by the melting of the snows, which often coincides with Lent. I may add that Moorcroft was told respecting a sacred pond near Sir-i-Chashmá, on the road from Kabul to Bamian, that the fish in the pond were not allowed to be touched, but that they were accustomed to desert it for the rivulet that ran through the valley regularly every year *on the day of the vernal equinox*, and it was then lawful to catch them.

Like circumstances would produce the same effect in a variety of lakes, and I have not been able to identify the convent of St. Leonard's. Indeed Leonard (*Saint Leonard*, G. T.) seems no likely name for an Armenian saint; and the patroness of the convent (as she is of many others in that country) was perhaps Saint *Vina*, an eminent personage in the Armenian Church, whose tomb is still a place of pilgrimage; or possibly St. *Helena*, for I see that the Russian maps show a place called *Elenovka* on the shores of Lake Sevan, N.E. of Erivan. Ramusio's text, moreover, says that the lake was *four days in compass*, and this description will apply, I believe, to none but the lake just named. This is, according to Monteith, 47 m. in length and 21 m. in breadth, and as far as I can make out he travelled round it in three very long marches. Convents and churches on its shores are numerous, and a very ancient one occupies an island on the lake. The lake is noted for its fish, especially magnificent trout.

(*Tavern.*, Bk. III. ch. iii. ; *J. R. G. S.*, X. 897 ; *Peregr. Quat.* p. 179 ; *Khanikoff*, 15 ; *Moorcroft*, II. 382 ; *J. R. G. S.*, III. 40 *seqq.*)

NOTE 7.—The name assigned by Marco to the Caspian, "Mer de Gheluchelan" or "Ghelachelan," has puzzled commentators. I have no doubt that the interpretation adopted above is the correct one. I suppose that Marco said that the sea was called "La Mer de Ghel ou (de) Ghelan," a name taken from the districts of the ancient *Gelæ* on its south-western shores, called indifferently *Gil* or *Gillán*, just as many other regions of Asia have like duplicate titles (singular and plural), arising, I suppose, from the change of a *gentile* into a *local* name. Such are Lár, Lárán, Khutl, Khutlán, &c., a class to which Badakhshan, Wakhan,

Shaghnán, and others have formerly belonged, as the adjectives *Ba-dakhshi*, &c. show. Abulfeda, speaking of this territory, uses exactly Polo's phrase, saying that the districts in question are properly called *Kil-o-Kilán*, but by the Arabs *Jil-o-Jilán*. Teixeira gives the Persian name of the sea as *Darya Ghilani* (see *Abulf.* in *Büsching*, v. 329).

The province of Gil gave name to the silk for which it was and is still famous, mentioned as *Ghellé* (*Gili*) at the end of this chapter. This *Seta Ghella* is mentioned also by Pegolotti (pp. 212, 238, 301), and by Uzzano, with an odd transposition, as *Seta Leggi*, along with *Seta Masandroni*, i.e. from the adjoining province of Mazanderán (p. 192). May not the Spanish *Geliz* "a silk dealer," which seems to have been a puzzle to etymologists, be connected with this? (see *Droz and Engelmann*, 2nd ed. p. 275).

The dimensions assigned to the Caspian in the text would be very correct if length were meant, but the Geog. Text with the same figure specifies *circuit* (*sire*). Ramusio again has "a circuit of 2800 miles." Possibly the original reading was 2700; but this would be in excess.

NOTE 8.—The Caspian is termed by Vincent of Beauvais *Mare Seruanicum*, the Sea of Shirwan, another of its numerous Oriental names, rendered by Marino Sanuto as *Mare Salvanicum* (III. xi. ch. ix.). But it was generally known to the Franks in the Middle Ages as the SEA OF BACU. Thus Berni;—

"Fuor del deserto la diritta strada  
Lungo il Mar di Bacu miglior pareva."  
(*Orl. Innam.* xvii. 60.)

And in the *Sfera* of Lionardò Dati (circa 1390):—

"Da Tramontana di quest' Asia Grande  
Tartari son sotto la fredla Zona,  
Gente bestial di bestie e vivande,  
Fin dove l'Onda di Baccù risuona," &c. (p. 10.)

This name is introduced in Ramusio, but probably by interpolation, as well as the correction of the statement regarding Euphrates, which is perhaps a branch of the notion alluded to in *Prologue*, ch. ii. note 5. In a later chapter Marco calls it the *Sea of Sarai*, a title also given in the Carta Catalana.

We have little information as to the Genoese navigation of the Caspian, but the great number of names exhibited along its shores in the map just named (1374) shows how familiar such navigation had become by that date (see also *Cathay*, p. 50, where an account is given of a remarkable enterprise by Genoese buccaneers on the Caspian about that time.)

## CHAPTER V.

## OF THE KINGDOM OF MAUSUL.

ON the frontier of Armenia towards the south-east is the kingdom of MAUSUL. It is a very great kingdom, and inhabited<sup>1</sup> by several different kinds of people whom we shall now describe.

First there is a kind of people called ARABI, and these worship Mahomet. Then there is another description of people who are NESTORIAN and JACOBITE Christians. These have a Patriarch whom they call the JATOLIC, and this Patriarch creates Archbishops, and Abbots, and Prelates of all other degrees, and sends them into every quarter, as to India, to Baulas, or to Cathay, just as the Pope of Rome does in the Latin countries. For you must know that though there is a very great number of Christians in those countries, they are all Jacobites and Nestorians; Christians indeed, but not in the fashion enjoined by the Pope of Rome, for they come short in several points of the Faith.<sup>2</sup>

All the cloths of gold and silk that are called *Mosolins* are made in this country; and those great Merchants called *Mosolins* who carry for sale such quantities of spicery and pearls and cloths of silk and gold, are also from this kingdom.<sup>3</sup>

There is yet another race of people who inhabit the mountains in that quarter, and are called CURDS. Some of them are Christians, and some of them are Saracens; but they are an evil generation, whose delight it is to plunder merchants.<sup>4</sup>

[Near this province is another called MUS and MERDIN, producing an immense quantity of cotton, from which they make a great deal of buckram and other cloth. The people are craftsmen and traders, and all are subject to the Tartar King.<sup>5</sup>]

NOTE 1.—Polo could scarcely have been justified in calling MOSUL a very great kingdom. This is a bad habit of his, as we shall have to notice again. Badruddin Lûlû, the Atabeg of Mosul, had at the age of 96 taken sides with Hulaku, and stood high in his favour. His son Malik Sâlih, having revolted, surrendered to the Mongols in 1261 on promise of life; which promise they kept in Mongol fashion by torturing him to death. Since then the kingdom had ceased to exist as such. Coins of Badruddin remain with the name and titles of Mangu Kaan on their reverse, and some of his and of other atabegs exhibit curious imitations of Greek art. (*Quat. Rash.* p. 389; *Jour. As.* IV. VI. 141.)



Coin of Badruddin of Mausul.

NOTE 2.—The Nestorian Church was at this time and in the preceding centuries diffused over Asia to an extent of which little conception is generally entertained, having a chain of Bishops and Metropolitans from Jerusalem to Peking. The Church derived its name from Nestorius, Patriarch of Constantinople, who was deposed by the Council of Ephesus in 431. The chief "point of the Faith" wherein they came short, was (at least in its most tangible form) the doctrine that in Our Lord there were two Persons, one of the Divine Word, the other of the Man Jesus; the former dwelling in the latter as in a Temple, or uniting with the latter "as fire with iron." *Nestorin*, the term used by Polo, is almost a literal transcript of the Arab form *Nas-tûri*. A notice of the Metropolitan sees, with a map, will be found in *Cathay*, p. cxxliv.

*Jâthalik*, written in our text (from G. T.) *Jatolic*, by Fr. Burchard and Ricold *Jaselic*, is the title of the Patriarch, representing *Katholikos*. No doubt it was originally *Gâthalik*, but altered in pronunciation by the Arabs. The Nestorian Patriarch at this time resided at Baghdad. (*Assemani*, vol. iii. pt. 2; *Per. Quat.* 91, 127.)

The Jacobites, or Jacobins as they are called by writers of that age (Ar. *Ya'kûbiy*), received their name from Jacob Baradaeus, Bishop of Edessa (so called, Mas'udi says, because he was a maker of *Barda'at* or saddle-cloths), who gave a great impulse to their doctrine in the 6th century. They formed a church, which at one time spread over the East at least as far as Sijistân, where they had a see under the Sassanian Kings. Their distinguishing tenet was *Monophysitism*, viz., that Our Lord had but one Nature, the Divine. It was in fact a rebound from Nestorian doctrine, but, as might be expected in such a case, there was a vast number of shades of opinion among both bodies. The chief locality of the Jacobites was in the districts of Mosul, Tekrit, and Jazirah, and their Patriarch was at this time settled at the Monastery of St. Matthew, near Mosul, but afterwards, and to the present day, at or near Mardin. The Armenian, Coptic, Abyssinian, and Malabar

Churches all hold some shade of the Jacobite doctrine, though they have, except the last, Patriarchs apart.

(*Assemani*, vol. ii. ; *Le Quien*, II. 1596 ; *Mas'udi*, II. 329-30 ; *Per. Quat.* 124-9.)

NOTE 3.—We see here that *mosolin* or *muslin* had a very different meaning from what it has now. A quotation from Ives by Marsden shows it to have been applied in the middle of last century to a strong cotton cloth made at Mosul. Dozy says the Arabs use *Mauçili* in the sense of muslin, and refers to passages in the 'Arabian Nights.' But do they indicate more than *some* texture? (p. 323). I have found no elucidation of Polo's application of *mosolini* to a class of merchants. But in a letter of Pope Innocent IV. (1244) to the Dominicans in Palestine, we find classed as different bodies of Oriental Christians, "*Jacobitæ, Nestoritæ, Georgiani, Græci, Armeni, Marenitæ, et Mosolini*" (*Le Quen.* III. 1342.)

NOTE 4.—"The Kurds," says Ricold, "exceed in malignant ferocity all the barbarous nations that I have seen. . . . They are called *Curti*, not because they are cut in stature, but from the Persian word for *Wolves*. . . . They have three principal vices, viz., Murder, Robbery, and Treachery." Some say they have not mended since, but his etymology is doubtful. *Kürt* is Turkish for a wolf, not Persian, which is *Gurg*; but the name (*Kanduchi, Korduchi, &c.*) is older, I imagine, than the Turkish language in that part of Asia. Quarrenière refers it to the Persian *gurd*, "strong, valiant, hero." As regards the statement that some of the Kurds were Christians, Mas'udi states that the Jacobites and certain other Christians in the territory of Mosul and Mount Judi were reckoned among the Kurds. (*Nat. et Hist.* XIII. i. 304.)

NOTE 5.—This passage is notable as being the only one, so far as I know, of those peculiar to Ramusio among the printed texts, which is found in a known MS. It occurs in a Latin MS. of 1401, which belonged to the late Sign. Cicogna at Venice. The word rendered *buckrams* is there *Bocharini*, for which Ramusio, as in all passages where other texts have *Bucherami* and the like, puts *Bocassini*. I see both *Bochayrani* and *Bochasini* coupled, in a Genoese fiscal statute of 1339, quoted by Pardessus. (*Lois Maritimes*, IV. 456.)

MUSH and MARDIN are in very different regions, but as their actual interval is only about 120 miles, they *may* have been under one provincial government. Mush is essentially Armenian, and, though the seat of a Pashalik, is now a wretched place. Mardin, on the verge of the Mesopotamian Plain, rises in terraces on a lofty hill, and there, says Hammer, "Sunnis and Shias, Catholic and Schismatic Armenians, Jacobites, Nestorians, Chaldaeans, Sun-, Fire-, Calf-, and Devil-worshippers dwell one over the head of the other." (*Ilchan.* I. 191.)

## CHAPTER VI.

OF THE GREAT CITY OF BAUDAS, AND HOW IT WAS TAKEN.

BAUDAS is a great city, which used to be the seat of the Calif of all the Saracens in the world, just as Rome is the seat of the Pope of all the Christians.<sup>1</sup> A very great river flows through the city, and by this you can descend to the Sea of India. There is a great traffic of merchants with their goods this way ; they descend some eighteen days from Baudas, and then come to a certain city called KISI, where they enter the Sea of India.<sup>2</sup> There is also on the river, as you go from Baudas to Kisi, a great city called BASTRA, surrounded by woods, in which grow the best dates in the world.<sup>3</sup>

In Baudas they weave many different kinds of silk stuffs and gold brocades, such as *nasich*, and *nac*, and *cramoisy*, and many another beautiful tissue richly wrought with figures of beasts and birds. It is the noblest and greatest city in all those regions.<sup>4</sup>

Now it came to pass on a day in the year of Christ 1255, that the Lord of the Tartars of the Levant, whose name was Alaü, brother to the Great Kaan now reigning, gathered a mighty host and came up against Baudas and took it by storm.<sup>5</sup> It was a great enterprise ! for in Baudas there were more than 100,000 horse, besides foot soldiers. And when Alaü had taken the place he found therein a tower of the Calif's, which was full of gold and silver and other treasure ; in fact the greatest accumulation of treasure in one spot that ever was known. When he beheld that great heap of treasure he was astonished, and, summoning the Calif to his presence, he said to him ; " Calif, tell me now why thou hast gathered such a huge treasure ? What didst thou mean to do therewith ? Knewest thou not that I was thine enemy, and that I was coming against thee with so great an host to cast thee forth of thine heritage ?

Wherefore didst thou not take of thy gear and employ it in paying knights and soldiers to defend thee and thy city?"

The Calif wist not what to answer, and said never a word. So the Prince continued, "Now then, Calif, since I see what a love thou hast borne thy treasure, I will e'en give it thee to eat!" So he shut the Calif up in the Treasure Tower, and bade that neither meat nor drink should be given him, saying, "Now Calif, eat of thy treasure as much as thou wilt, since thou art so fond of it; for never shalt thou have aught else to eat!"

So the Calif lingered in the tower four days, and then died like a dog. Truly his treasure would have been of more service to him had he bestowed it upon men who would have defended his kingdom and his people, rather than let himself be taken and deposed and put to death as he was.<sup>6</sup> Howbeit, since that time, there has been never another Calif, either at Baudas or anywhere else.<sup>7</sup>

Now I will tell you of a great miracle that befel at Baudas, wrought by God on behalf of the Christians.

NOTE 1.—This form of the mediæval Frank name of BAGHDAD, *Baudas*, is curiously like that used by the Chinese historians, *Puota* (*Pauthier: Gaubil*), and both are probably due to the Mongol habit of slurring gutturals (see *Prelim.*, ch. ii. note 3).

NOTE 2.—Polo is here either speaking without personal knowledge, or is so brief as to convey an erroneous impression that the Tigris flows to Kisi, whereas three-fourths of the length of the Persian Gulf intervene between the river mouth and Kisi. The latter is the island and city of KISH or KAIS, about 200 miles from the mouth of the Gulf, and for a long time one of the chief ports of trade with India and the East. The island, the *Cataca* of Arrian, now called Ghés or Kenn, is singular among the islands of the Gulf as being wooded and well supplied with fresh water. The ruins of a city exist on the north side. According to Wassáf, the island derived its name from one Kais, about the 10th century, the son of a poor widow of Siraf (then a great port of Indian trade on the northern shore of the Gulf), who on a voyage to India made a fortune precisely as Dick Whittington did. The proceeds of the cat were invested in an establishment on this island. Modern attempts to rationalize Whittington may surely be given up! It is one of the tales which, like Tell's shot, the dog Gellert, and many others, are common to



many regions. (*Hammer's Ilch.* I. 239; *Ouseley's Travels*, I. 170; *Notes and Queries*, 2nd s. XI. 372.)

NOTE 3.—The name is *Basra* in the MSS., but this is almost certainly the common error of *c* for *t*. BASRA is still noted for its vast date-groves. "The whole country from the confluence of the Euphrates and Tigris to the sea, a distance of thirty leagues, is covered with these trees." (*Tav.* Bk. II. ch. iii.).

NOTE 4.—From Baudas, or Baldac, *i.e.* Baghdad, certain of these rich silk and gold brocades were called *Baldachini*, or in English *Baudkins*. From their use in the state canopies and umbrellas of Italian dignitaries, the word *Baldacchino* has come to mean a canopy, even when architectural. The stuffs called *Nasich* and *Nac* are again mentioned by our traveller below (ch. lix.). We only know that they were of silk and gold, as he implies here, and as Ibn Batuta tells us, who mentions *Nakh* several times and *Nasij* once. The latter is also mentioned by Rubruquis (*Nasie*) as a present made to him at the Kaan's court. And Pegolotti speaks of both *nacchi* and *nachetti* of silk and gold, the latter apparently answering to *Nasich*. *Nac*, *Nacques*, *Nachiz*, *Nacis*, *Nasis*, appear in accounts and inventories of the 14th century, French and English. (See *Dictionnaire des Tissus*, II. 199, and *Dout d'Arq, Comptes de l'Argenterie des Rois de France*, &c., p. 334.) We find no mention of *Nakh* or *Nasij* among the stuffs detailed in the *Ain Akbari*, so they must have been obsolete in the 16th century. *Quermesis* or Cramoisy derived its name from the Kermes insect (Ar. *Kirmiz*) found on *Quercus Coccifera*, now supplanted by cochineal. The stuff so called is believed to have been originally a crimson velvet, but apparently like the medieval *Purpura*, if not identical with it, it came to indicate a tissue rather than a colour. Thus Fr.-Michel quotes velvet of vermeil cramoisy, of violet, and of blue cramoisy, and *pourpres* of a variety of colours, though he says he has never met with *pourpre blanche*. I may, however, point to Plano Carpini (p. 755), who describes the courtiers at Karakorum as clad in white *purpura*.

The London prices of *Chermisi* and *Baldachini* in the early part of the 15th century will be found in Uzzano's work, but they are hard to elucidate.

Babylon, of which Baghdad was the representative, was famous for its variegated textures in very early days. We do not know the nature of the goodly Babylonish garment which tempted Achan in Jericho, but Josephus speaks of the affluence of rich stuffs carried in the triumph of Titus, "gorgeous with life-like designs from the Babylonian loom," and he also describes the memorable Veil of the Temple as a *πέπλος Βαβυλώνιος* of varied colours, marvellously wrought. Pliny says King Attalus invented the intertexture of cloth with gold; but the weaving of damasks of a variety of colours was perfected at Babylon, and thence they were called Babylonian.

The brocades wrought with figures of animals in gold, of which

Marco speaks, are still a *spécialité* at Benares, where they are known by the name of *Shikārgāh* or hunting-grounds, which is nearly a translation of the name *Thard-wahsh*, "beast-hunts," by which they were known to the medieval Saracens (see *Q. Makrizi*, IV. 69-70). Plautus speaks of such patterns in carpets, the produce of Alexandria—"Alexandrina belluata conchyliatu tapetia." In the 4th century Asterius, Bishop of Amasia in Pontus, rebukes the Christians who indulge in such attire: "You find upon them lions, panthers, bears, huntsmen, woods and rocks; whilst the more devout display Christ and his disciples, with the stories of his miracles," &c. And Sidonius alludes to upholstery of like character:—

"Peregrina let supplex  
\*   \*   \*  
Ubi totius, et per attem  
Resapina flexus ora'  
It equo igiturq; telo  
Simulacra be barum  
Fugens fugasque paribus." (*Lucan.* ix. 13).

A modern Cashmere example of such work is shown under Ch. xvii.

(*D'Arzac*, p. 524; *Pegolotti*, in *Catany*, 205, 306; *J. B.* II, 309, 388, 422; III, 81; *Della Decima*, IV, 125-6; *Fr. Michel, Recherches*, &c., II, 10-16, 204-206; *Joseph. Bell. jud.* VII, 5, 57 and V, 5, 4; *Pliny*, VIII, 74 (or 48); *Plautus, Pseudolus*, I, 2; *Mons.* in *Mém. Acad.* IV, 275-6.)

NOTE 5.—Hulaku started from Katarokum on his expedition against Persia, in February, 1254, but he did not enter Persia till 1256, and Baghdad was not attacked till 1258.

NOTE 6.—

I said to the Kalit: Thou art old;  
 Thou hast no need of so much gold.  
 Thou shouldst not have heaped and hidden it here  
 Till the breath of Battle was hot and near,  
 But have sown through the land these useless hoards,  
 To spring into shining blades of swords,  
 And keep thine honour sweet and clear.

Then into his dungeon I locked the drone,  
And left him there to feed all alone  
In the honey-cells of his golden hive :  
Never a prayer nor a cry nor a groan  
Was heard from those massive walls of stone,  
Nor again was the Kalif seen alive.  
This is the story, strange and true,  
That the great Captain Alai  
Told to his brother, the Tartar Khan,  
When he rode that day into Samball  
By the road that leadeth to Ispahan." (*Longfellow*).

The story of the death of Mosta'sim Billah, the last of the Abbaside Khalifs, is told in much the same way by Hayton, Ricold, Pachymeres, and Joinville. The memory of the last glorious old man must have

failed him, when he says the facts were related by some merchants who came to King Lewis, when before Siette (or Sidon), viz. in 1253, for the capture of Baghdad occurred five years later. Mar. Sanuto says melted gold was poured down the Khalif's throat—a transfer no doubt from the old story of Crassus and the Parthians. Contemporary Armenian historians assert that Hulaku slew him with his own hand.

All that Rashiduddin says is: "The evening of Wednesday the 14th. of Safar, 656 (20th Feb. 1258), the Khalif was put to death in the village of Wafk, with his eldest son and five eunuchs who had never quitted him." Later writers say that he was wrapt in a carpet and trodden to death by horses.

The foundation of the story so widely received among the Christians is to be found also in the narrative of Nikbi (and Mirkhond), which is cited by D'Ohsson. When the Khalif surrendered, Hulaku put before him a plateful of gold, and told him to eat it. "But one does not eat gold," said the prisoner. "Why then," replied the Tartar, "did you hoard it, instead of expending it in keeping up an army? Why did you not meet me at the Oxus?" The Khalif could only say, "Such was God's will!" "And that which has befallen you was also God's will," said Hulaku.

Wassáf's narrative is interesting:—"Two days after his capture the Khalif was at his morning prayer, and began with the verse (*Koran*, III. 25) 'Say God is the Possessor of Dominion! It shall be given to whom He will; it shall be taken from whom He will: whom He will He raiseth to honour; whom He will He casteth to the ground.' Having finished the regular office he continued still in prayer with tears and importunity. Bystanders reported to the Ilkhan the deep humiliation of the Khalif's prayers, and the text which seemed to have so striking an application to those two princes. Regarding what followed there are different stories. Some say that the Ilkhan ordered food to be withheld from the Khalif, and that when he asked for food the former bade a dish of gold be placed before him, &c. Eventually, after taking counsel with his chiefs, the Padishah ordered the execution of the Khalif. It was represented that the blood-drinking sword ought not to be stained with the gore of Mosta'sim. He was therefore rolled in a carpet, just as carpets are usually rolled up, insomuch that his limbs were crushed."

The avarice of the Khalif was proverbial. When the Mongol army was investing Miafaraḡain, the chief, Malik Kamál, told his people that everything he had should be at the service of those in need: "Thank God I am not like Mosta'sim, a worshipper of silver and gold!"

(*Hayton in Ram.* ch. xxvi. ; *Per. Quat.* 121 ; *Pachym. Mic. Palacol.* II. 24 ; *Joinville*, p. 182 ; *Sanuto*, p. 238 ; *J. As.* ser. 5. tom. xi. 490, and XVI. 291 ; *D'Ohsson*, III. 243 ; *Hammer's Wassáf*, 75-76 ; *Quat. Rashid.* 305.)

NOTE 7.—Nevertheless Froissart brings the Khalif to life again one hundred and twenty years later, as "*Le Galifre de Baudas*" (Bk. III. ch. xxiv.).

## CHAPTER VII.

HOW THE CALIF OF BAUDAS TOOK COUNSEL TO SLAY ALL THE  
CHRISTIANS IN HIS LAND.

I WILL tell you then this great marvel that occurred between Baudas and Mausul.

It was in the year of Christ<sup>1</sup> . . . that there was a Calif at Baudas who bore a great hatred to Christians, and was taken up day and night with the thought how he might either bring those that were in his kingdom over to his own faith, or might procure them all to be slain. And he used daily to take counsel about this with the devotees and priests of his faith,<sup>2</sup> for they all bore the Christians like malice. And, indeed, it is a fact, that the whole body of Saracens throughout the world are always most malignantly disposed towards the whole body of Christians.

Now it happened that the Calif, with those shrewd priests of his, got hold of that passage in our Gospel which says, that if a Christian had faith as a grain of mustard seed, and should bid a mountain be removed, it would be removed. And such indeed is the truth. But when they had got hold of this text they were delighted, for it seemed to them the very thing whereby either to force all the Christians to change their faith, or to bring destruction upon them all. The Calif therefore called together all the Christians in his territories, who were extremely numerous. And when they had come before him, he showed them the Gospel, and made them read the text which I have mentioned. And when they had read it he asked them if that was the truth? The Christians answered that it assuredly was so. "Well," said the Calif, "since you say that it is the truth, I will give you a choice. Among such a number of you there must needs surely be this small amount of faith; so you must either move that mountain there,"—and he pointed to a mountain in the neighbourhood—"or

you shall die an ill death ; unless you choose to eschew death by all becoming Saracens and adopting our Holy Law. To this end I give you a respite of ten days ; if the thing be not done by that time, you shall die or become Saracens." And when he had said this he dismissed them, to consider what was to be done in this strait wherein they were.

NOTE 1.—The date in the G. Text and Pauthier is 1275, which of course cannot have been intended. Ramusio has 1225.

NOTE 2.—“ *Cum sez registes et cum sez casses* ” (G. T.). I suppose the former expression to be a form of *Regules*, which is used in Polo's book for persons of a religious *rule* or order, whether Christian or Pagan. The latter word (*casses*) I take to be the Arabic *Kāshīsh*, properly a Christian Presbyter, but frequently applied by old travellers, and habitually by the Portuguese (*caxiz*, *caxiv*) to Mahomedan Divines (see *Cathay*, p. 568).

Pauthier's Text has simply “à ses prestres de la Loi.”

## CHAPTER VIII.

HOW THE CHRISTIANS WERE IN GREAT DISMAY BECAUSE OF WHAT THE CALIF HAD SAID.

THE Christians on hearing what the Calif had said, were in great dismay, but they lifted all their hopes to God their Creator, that he would help them in this their strait. All the wisest of the Christians took counsel together, and among them were a number of bishops and priests, but they had no resource except to turn to Him from whom all good things do come, beseeching Him to protect them from the cruel hands of the Calif.

So they were all gathered together in prayer, both men and women, for eight days and eight nights. And whilst they were thus engaged in prayer it was revealed in a vision by a Holy Angel of Heaven to a certain Bishop who was a

very good Christian, that he should desire a certain Christian Cöbler,<sup>1</sup> who had but one eye, to pray to God; and that God in His goodness would grant such prayer because of the Cöbler's holy life.

Now I must tell you what manner of man this Cöbler was. He was one who led a life of great uprightness and chastity, and who fasted and kept from all sin, and went daily to church to hear Mass, and gave daily a portion of his gains to God. And the way how he came to have but one eye was this. It happened one day that a certain woman came to him to have a pair of shoes made, and she showed him her foot that he might take her measure. Now she had a very beautiful foot and leg; and the Cöbler in taking her measure was conscious of sinful thoughts. And he had often heard it said in the Holy Evangel, that if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee rather than sin. So, as soon as the woman had departed, he took the awl that he used in stitching, and drove it into his eye and destroyed it. And this is the way he came to lose his eye. So you can judge what a holy, just, and righteous man he was.

NOTE 1.—Here the G. T. uses a strange word: "*Or te vais a tel calantur.*" It does not occur again, being replaced by *chabitier* (saw-tier). It has an Oriental look, but I can make no satisfactory suggestion as to the word meant. *Kalandar* is the term applied to a religious order among the Mahomedans who profess not only detachment from the world, but also *strict chastity*.

The nearest word meaning shoemaker that I can suggest is (Pers.) *charmdoz*.

## CHAPTER IX.

HOW THE ONE-EYED CÖBLER WAS DESIRED TO PRAY FOR THE CHRISTIANS.

Now when this vision had visited the Bishop several times, he related the whole matter to the Christians, and they

agreed with one consent to call the Cöbler before them. And when he had come they told him it was their wish that he should pray, and that God had promised to accomplish the matter by his means. On hearing their request he made many excuses, declaring that he was not at all so good a man as they represented. But they persisted in their request with so much sweetness, that at last he said he would not tarry, but do what they desired.

## CHAPTER X.

HOW THE PRAYER OF THE ONE-EYED COBLER CAUSED THE MOUNTAIN TO MOVE.

AND when the appointed day was come, all the Christians got up early, men and women, small and great, more than 100,000 persons, and went to church, and heard the Holy Mass. And after Mass had been sung, they all went forth together in a great procession to the plain in front of the mountain, carrying the precious cross before them, loudly singing and greatly weeping as they went. And when they arrived at the spot, there they found the Calif with all his Saracen host armed to slay them if they would not change their faith; for the Saracens believed not in the least that God would grant such favour to the Christians. These latter stood indeed in great fear and doubt, but nevertheless they rested their hope on their God Jesus Christ.

So the Cobler received the Bishop's benison, and then threw himself on his knees before the Holy Cross, and stretched out his hands towards Heaven, and made this prayer: "Blessed LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, I pray thee by Thy goodness that Thou wilt grant this grace unto Thy people insomuch that they perish not, nor Thy faith be cast down, nor abused nor flouted. Not that I am in the least worthy to prefer such request unto Thee; but for Thy

great power and mercy I beseech thee to hear this prayer from me Thy servant full of sin."

And when he had ended this his prayer to God the Sovereign Father and Giver of all grace, and whilst the Calif and all the Saracens, and other people there, were looking on, the mountain rose out of its place and moved to the spot which the Calif had pointed out! And when the Calif and all his Saracens beheld, they stood amazed at the wonderful miracle that God had wrought for the Christians, insomuch that a great number of the Saracens became Christians. And even the Calif caused himself to be baptised in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, Amen, and became a Christian, but in secret. Howbeit, when he died they found a little cross hung round his neck; and therefore the Saracens would not bury him with the other Califs, but put him in a place apart. The Christians exulted greatly at this most holy miracle, and returned to their homes full of joy, giving thanks to their Creator for that which he had done.'

And now you have heard in what wise took place this great miracle. And marvel not that the Saracens hate the Christians; for the accursed law that Mahomet gave them commands them to do all the mischief in their power to all other descriptions of people, and especially to Christians; to strip such of their goods, and do them all manner of evil, because they belong not to their law. See then what an evil law, and what naughty commandments they have! But in such fashion the Saracens act, throughout the world.

Now I have told you something of Baudas. I could easily indeed have told you first of the affairs and the customs of the people there. But it would be too long a business, looking to the great and strange things that I have got to tell you, as you will find detailed in this book.

So now I will tell you of the noble city of Tauris.



NOTE 1.—We may remember that at a date only three years before Marco related this story (viz. in 1295), the cottage of Loreto is asserted to have changed its locality for the third and last time by moving to the site which it now occupies.

Some of the old Latin copies place the scene at Tauris. And I observe that a missionary of the 16th century does the same. The mountain, he says, is between Tauris and Nakhshiwan, and is called *Manhuc*. (*Gravina, Christianità nell' Armenia*, &c., Roma, 1605, p. 91.)

The moving of a mountain is one of the miracles ascribed to Gregory Thaumaturgus. Such stories are rife among the Mahomedans themselves. "I know," says Khanikoff, "at least half a score of mountains which the Musulmans allege to have come from the vicinity of Mecca."

Ramusio's text adds here: "All the Nestorian and Jacobite Christians from that time forward have maintained a solemn celebration of the day on which the miracle occurred; keeping a fast also on the eve thereof."

## CHAPTER XI.

### OF THE NOBLE CITY OF TAURIS.

TAURIS is a great and noble city, situated in a great province called YRAC, in which are many other towns and villages. But as Tauris is the most noble I will tell you about it.<sup>1</sup>

The men of Tauris get their living by trade and handicrafts, for they weave many kinds of beautiful and valuable stuffs of silk and gold. The city has such a good position that merchandize is brought thither from India, Baudas, Cremesor,<sup>2</sup> and many other regions; and that attracts many Latin merchants, especially Genoese, to buy goods and transact other business there; the more as it is also a great market for precious stones. It is a city in fact where merchants make large profits.<sup>3</sup>

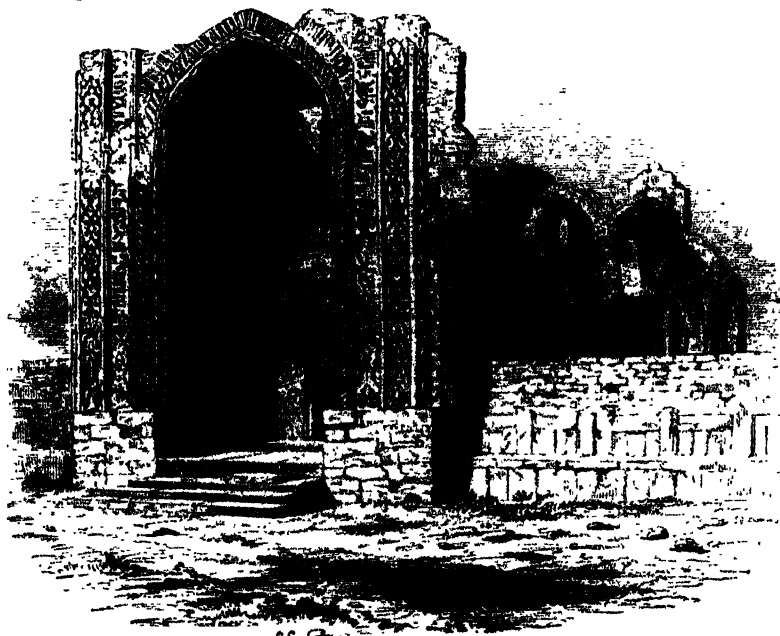
The people of the place are themselves poor creatures; and are a great medley of different classes. There are Armenians, Nestorians, Jacobites, Georgians, Persians, and finally the natives of the city themselves, who are worshippers of Mahommet. These last are a very evil generation; they are known as TAURIZI.<sup>4</sup> The city is all girt

round with charming gardens, full of many varieties of large and excellent fruits.<sup>5</sup>

Now we will quit Tauris, and speak of the great country of Persia. [From Tauris to Persia is a journey of twelve days.]

NOTE 1.—Abulfeda notices that TABRIZ was vulgarly pronounced *Tauriz*, and this appears to have been adopted by the Franks. In Pegolotti the name is always *Torissi*.

Tabriz is often reckoned to belong to Armenia, as by Hayton. Properly it is the chief city of *Adherbaijân*, which never was included in 'IRAK. But it may be observed that Ibn Batuta generally calls the Mongol Ilkhan of Persia *Sâhib* or *Malik ul-'Irâk*, and as Tabriz was the capital of that sovereign we can account for the mistake, whilst admitting it to be one.



Ghazan Khan's Mosque at Tabriz.—From Fergusson.

NOTE 2.—*Cremesor*, as Baldello points out, is GARMSIR, meaning a hot region, a term which in Persia has acquired several specific applications, and especially indicates the coast-country on the N.E. side of the Persian Gulf, including Hormuz and the ports in that quarter.

NOTE 3.—At a later date (1341) the Genoese had a factory at Tabriz headed by a consul with a council of twenty-four merchants, and in 1320 there is evidence of Venetian settlement there. (*Elie de la Prim.* 161; *Heyd*, II. 82.)

Rashiduddin says of Tabriz that there were gathered there under the eyes of the Padishah of Islam "philosophers, astronomers, scholars, historians, of all religions, of all sects; people of Cathay, of Máchín, of India, of Kashmir, of Tibet, of the Uighur and other Turkish nations, Arabs and Franks." Ibn Batuta: "I traversed the bazaar of the jewellers, and my eyes were dazzled by the varieties of precious stones which I beheld. Handsome slaves, superbly dressed, and girdled with silk, offered their gems for sale to the Tartar ladies, who bought great numbers." Tabriz maintained a large population and prosperity down to the 17th century, as may be seen in Chardin. It is now greatly fallen, though still a place of importance. (*Quat. Rash.* p. 39; *I. B.* II. 130.)

NOTE 4.—In Pauthier's text this is *Touzi*, a mere clerical error I doubt not for *Torizi*, in accordance with the G. Text ("*le peuple de la cité que sunt apelés Tauriz*"), with the Latin, and with Ramusio. All that he means to say is that the people are called *Tabrizis*. Not récondite information, but 'tis his way. Just so he tells us in Chap. iii. that the people of Hermenia are called Hermins, and elsewhere that the people of Tebet are called Tebet. So Hayton thinks it not inappropriate to say that the people of Catay are called Cataini, that the people of Corasmia are called Corasmins, and that the people of the cities of Persia are called Persians.

NOTE 5.—Hamdalla Mastúfi, the Geographer, not long after Polo's time, gives an account of Tabriz, quoted in Barbier de Meynard's *Dict. de la Perse*. This also notices the extensive gardens round the city, the great abundance and cheapness of fruits, the vanity, insolence, and faithlessness of the Tabrizis, &c. (p. 132 *seqq.*). Our cut shows a relic of the Mongol Dynasty at Tabriz.

## [CHAPTER XII.]

OF THE MONASTERY OF SAINT BARSAMO ON THE BORDERS OF TAURIS.

ON the borders of (the territory of) Tauris there is a monastery called after Saint Barsamo, a most devout Saint. There is an Abbot, with many Monks, who wear a habit like that of the Carmelites, and these to avoid idleness are continually knitting woollen girdles. These they place upon the altar of St. Barsamo during the service, and when they go begging about the province (like the Brethren of the Holy Spirit) they present them to their friends and to the gentlefolks, for they are excellent things to remove bodily pain; wherefore every one is devoutly eager to possess them.']

NOTE 1.—Barsauma ("The Son of Fasting") was a native of Samosata, and an Archimandrite of the Asiatic Church. He opposed the Nestorians, but became himself still more obnoxious to the orthodox as a spreader of the Monophysite Heresy. He was condemned by the Council of Chalcedon (451), and died in 458. He is a Saint of fame in the Jacobite and Armenian Churches, and several monasteries were dedicated to him; but by far the most celebrated, and doubtless that meant here, was near Malatia. It must have been famous even among the Mahomedans, for it has an article in Baküi's Geog. Dictionary (*Dir-Barsüma*, see *N. et Ext.* II. 515). This monastery possessed relics of Barsauma and of St. Peter, and was sometimes the residence of the Jacobite Patriarch, and the meeting-place of the Synods.

A more marvellous story than Marco's is related of this monastery by Vincent of Beauvais: "There is in that kingdom (Armenia) a place called St. Brassamus, at which there is a monastery for 300 monks. And 'tis said that if ever an enemy attacks it, the defences of the monastery move of themselves, and shoot back the shot against the besieger."

(*Assemani* in vol. ii. *passim*; *Tournfort*, III. 260; *Vin. Bell. Spec. Historiale*, Lib. XXX. c. cxlii.; see also *Mar. Sanut.* III. xi. c. 16.)

## CHAPTER XIII.

### OF THE GREAT COUNTRY OF PERSIA; WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF THE THREE KINGS.

PERSIA is a great country, which was in old times very illustrious and powerful; but now the Tartars have wasted and destroyed it.

In Persia is the city of SABA, from which the Three Magi set out when they went to worship Jesus Christ; and in this city they are buried, in three very large and beautiful monuments, side by side. And above them there is a square building, carefully kept. The bodies are still entire, with the hair and beard remaining. One of these was called Jaspar, the second Melchior, and the third Balthazar. Messer Marco Polo asked a great many questions of the people of that city as to those Three Magi, but never one could he find that knew aught of the matter, except that these were three kings who were buried there in days of old.

However, at a place three days' journey distant he heard of what I am going to tell you. He found a village there which goes by the name of CALA ATAPERISTAN,<sup>1</sup> which is as much as to say, "The Castle of the Fire-Worshippers." And the name is rightly applied, for the people there do worship fire, and I will tell you why.

They relate that in old times three kings of that country went away to worship a Prophet that was born, and they carried with them three manner of offerings, Gold, and Frankincense, and Myrrh; in order to ascertain whether that Prophet were God, or an earthly King, or a Physician. For, said they, if he take the Gold, then he is an earthly King; if he take the Incense he is God; if he take the Myrrh he is a Physician.

So it came to pass when they had come to the place where the child was born, the youngest of the Three Kings went in first, and found the Child apparently just of his own age; so he went forth again marvelling greatly. The middle one entered next, and like the first he found the Child seemingly of his own age; so he also went forth again and marvelled greatly. Lastly, the eldest went in, and as it had befallen the other two, so it befel him. And he went forth very pensive. And when the three had rejoined one another, each told what he had seen; and then they all marvelled the more. So they agreed to go in all three together, and on doing so they beheld the Child with the appearance of its actual age, to wit, some thirteen days.<sup>2</sup> Then they adored, and presented their Gold and Incense and Myrrh. And the Child took all the three offerings, and then gave them a small closed box; whereupon the Kings departed to return into their own land.

NOTE 1.—*Kala'a Atishparastān*, meaning as in the Text (*Marsden*).

NOTE 2.—According to the Collectanea ascribed to Bede, Melchior was a hoary old man; Balthazar in his prime, with a beard; Gaspar young and beardless. (*Inchofer, Tres Magi Evangelici, Romae, 1639.*)

## CHAPTER XIV.

HOW THE THREE KINGS RETURNED TO THEIR OWN COUNTRY.

AND when they had ridden many days they said they would see what the Child had given them. So they opened the little box, and inside it they found a stone. On seeing this they began to wonder what this might be that the Child had given them, and what was the import thereof. Now the signification was this: when they presented their offerings, the Child had accepted all three, and when they saw that they had said within themselves that He was the True God, and the True King, and the True Physician.<sup>1</sup> And what the gift of the stone implied was that this Faith which had begun in them should abide firm as a rock. For He well knew what was in their thoughts. Howbeit, they had no understanding at all of this signification of the gift of the stone; so they cast it into a well. Then straightway a fire from Heaven descended into that well wherein the stone had been cast.

And when the Three Kings beheld this marvel they were sore amazed, and it greatly repented them that they had cast away the stone; for well they then perceived that it had a great and holy meaning. So they took of that fire, and carried it into their own country, and placed it in a rich and beautiful church. And there the people keep it continually burning, and worship it as a God, and all the sacrifices they offer are kindled with that fire. And if ever the fire becomes extinct they go to other cities round about where the same faith is held, and obtain of that fire from them, and carry it to the church. And this is the reason why the people of this country worship fire. They will often go ten days' journey to get of that fire.<sup>2</sup>

Such then was the story told by the people of that Castle to Messer Marco Polo; they declared to him for a truth that such was their history, and that one of the three kings

was of the city called SABA, and the second of AVA, and the third of that very Castle where they still worship fire, with the people of all the country round about.<sup>3</sup>

Having related this story, I will now tell you of the different provinces of Persia, and their peculiarities.

NOTE 1.—“*Mire*.” This was in old French the popular word for a Leech; the politer word was *Physicien*. (*N. et E. V. 505.*)

Chrysostom says that the Gold, Myrrh, and Frankincense were mystic gifts indicating King, Man, God; and this interpretation was the usual one. Thus Prudentius:—

“Regem, Deumque adnunciant  
Thesaurus et fragrans odor  
Thuris Sabaei, at myrrheus  
Pulvis sepulchrum praedocet.” (*Hymnus Epiphanius.*)

And the Paris Liturgy:—

Offert Aurum *Caritas*,  
Et Myrrham *Austeritas*,  
Et Thus *Desiderium*.  
Auro *Rex* agnoscitur,  
*Homo* Myrrha, colitur  
Thure *Deus* gentium.

And in the “Hymns, Ancient and Modern”:—

“Sacred gifts of mystic meaning:  
Incense doth their God disclose,  
Gold the King of Kings proclaimeth,  
Myrrh His sepulchre foreshows.”

NOTE 2.—“*Feruntque (Magi), si justum est credi, etiam ignem coelitus lapsum, apud se sempiternis foculis custodiri, cujus portionem exiguam ut faustam praeesse quondam Asiaticis Regibus dicunt.*” (*Am-mian. Marcell. XXIII. 6.*)

NOTE 3.—Saba or Sava still exists as SÁVAH about 50 m. S.W. of Tehran. It is described by Mr. Consul Abbott, who visited it in 1849, as the most ruinous town he had ever seen, and as containing about 1000 families. The people retain a tradition, mentioned by Hamdallah Mastúfi, that the city stood on the shores of a Lake which dried up miraculously at the birth of Mahommed. Sávah is said to have possessed one of the greatest Libraries in the East, until its destruction by the Mongols on their first invasion of Persia. Both Sávah and Avah (or Ábah) are mentioned by Abulfeda as cities of Jibal. We are told that the two cities were always at loggerheads, the former being Sunni and the latter Shiya.

As regards the position of AVAH, Abbott says that a village still stands upon the site, about 16 m. S.S.E. of Sávah. He did not visit it, but took a bearing to it. He was told there was a mound there on which formerly stood a Gueber Castle. At Sávah he could find no trace of Marco Polo's legend. Chardin, in whose time Sávah was not quite so far gone to decay, heard of an alleged tomb of Samuel, at four leagues from the city. This is alluded to by Hamdallah.

Keith Johnstone and Kiepert put Avah some 60 m. W.N.W. of Sávah, on the road between Kazwin and Hamadan. There seems to be some great mistake here.

Friar Odoric puts the locality of the Magi at *Kashan*, though one version of his Itinerary, perhaps corrected in this, puts it at *Saba*.

We have no means of fixing the *Kala'a Atishparashin*. It is probable however that the story was picked up on the homeward journey, and as it seems to be implied that this castle was reached three days after leaving Sávah, I should look for it between Sávah and Abher.

As regards the Legend itself, which shows such a curious mixture of Christian and Parsi elements, it is related some 350 years earlier by Mas'udi: "In the Province of Fars they tell you of a Well called the Well of Fire, near which there was a temple built. When the Messiah was born the King Koresh sent three messengers to him, the first of whom carried a bag of Incense, the second a bag of Myrrh, and the third a bag of Gold. They set out under the guidance of the Star which the king had described to them, arrived in Syria, and found the Messiah with Mary his Mother. This story of the three messengers is related by the Christians with sundry exaggerations; it is also found in the Gospel. Thus, they say that the star appeared to Koresh at the moment of Christ's birth; that it went on when the messengers went on, and stopped when they stopped. More ample particulars will be found in our Historical Annals, where we have given the versions of this legend as current among the Guebers and among the Christians. It will be seen that Mary gave the king's messengers a round loaf, and this, after different adventures, they hid under a rock in the province of Fars. The loaf disappeared underground, and there they dug a well, on which they beheld two columns of fire to start up flaming at the surface; in short, all the details of the legend will be found in our Annals." The Editors say that Mas'udi had carried the story to Fars by mistaking *Shiz* in Adherbaijan (the Atropatenian Ecbatana of Sir H. Rawlinson) for *Shiraz*. A rudiment of the same legend is contained in the Arabic Gospel of the Infancy. This says that Mary gave the Magi one of the bands in which the Child was swathed. On their return they cast this into their sacred fire; though wrapt in the flame it remained unhurt.

We may add that there was a Christian tradition that the Star descended into a well between Jerusalem and Bethlehem. Gregory of Tours also relates that in a certain well, at Bethlehem, from which Mary had drawn water, the star was sometimes seen. by devout pilgrims who



looked carefully for it, to pass from one side to the other. But only such as merited the boon could see it.

(See *Abbott* in *J. R. G. S.* XXV. 4-6; *Assemani*, III. pt. 2, 750; *Chardin*, II. 407; *N. et. Ext.* II. 465; *Dict. de la Perse*, 2, 56, 298; *Cathay*, p. 51; *Mas'udi*, IV. 80; *Greg. Turon. Libri Miraculorum*, Paris, 1858, I. 8.)

Several of the fancies that legend has attached to the brief story of the Magi in St. Matthew, such as the royal dignity of the persons; their location, now in Arabia, now (as here) at Saba in Persia, and again (as in Hayton and the Catalan Map) in Tarsia or Eastern Turkestan; the notion that one of them was a Negro, and so on, probably grew out of the arbitrary application of passages in the Old Testament, such as: "*Venient legati ex Aegypto: AETHIOPIA praevenit manus ejus Deo*" (Ps. lxviii. 31). This produced the Negro who usually is painted as one of the Three. "*Reges THARSIS et Insulae munera offerunt: Reges ARABUM et SABA dona adducent*" (lxxii. 10). This made the Three into kings, and fixed them in Tarsia, Arabia, and Sava. "*Mundatio Camelorum operiet te, dromedarii Madian et EPHA: omnes de SABA venient aurum et thus deferentes et laudem Domino annunciantes*" (Is. lx. 6). Here were Ava and Sava coupled, as well as the gold and frankincense.

One form of the old Church Legend was that the Three were buried at *Sessania Adrumetorum* in Arabia, whence the Empress Helena had the bodies conveyed to Constantinople. Thence they were carried to Milan, and from Milan Frederic Barbarossa transferred them to Cologne.

The names given by Polo, Gaspar Melchior and Balthazar, have been accepted from an old date by the Roman Church; but an abundant variety of other names has been assigned to them. Hyde quotes a Syriac writer who calls them Aruphon, Hurmon, and Tachshesh, but says that some call them Gudphorbus, Artachshasht, and Labudo; whilst in Persian they were termed Amad, Zad-Amad, Drust-Amad, *i.e.* *Venit, Cito Venit, Sincerus Venit*. Some called them in Greek, Apellius, Amerus, and Damascus, and in Hebrew, Magaloth, Galgalath, and Saracia, but otherwise Ator, Sator and Petatoros! The Armenian Church used the same names as the Roman, but in Chaldee they were Kaghba, Badadilma, Badada Kharida. (*Hyde, Rel. Vet. Pers.* 382-3; *Inchofer* ut supra; *J. As.* ser. 6, IX. 160.)

## CHAPTER XV.

OF THE EIGHT KINGDOMS OF PERSIA, AND HOW THEY ARE NAMED.

Now you must know that Persia is a very great country, and contains eight kingdoms. I will tell you the names of them all.

The first kingdom is that at the beginning of Persia, and it is called CASVIN; the second is further to the south, and is called CURDISTAN; the third is called LOR; the fourth [SUOLSTAN]; the fifth ISTANIT; the sixth SERAZY; the seventh SONCARA; the eighth TUNOCAIN, which is at the further extremity of Persia. All these kingdoms lie in a southerly direction except one, to wit, Tunocain; that lies towards the east, and borders on the (country of the) Arbre Sol.<sup>1</sup>

In this country of Persia there is a great supply of fine horses; and people take them to India for sale, for they are horses of great price, a single one being worth as much of their money as is equal to 200 livres Tournois; some will be more, some less, according to the quality.<sup>2</sup> Here also are the finest asses in the world, one of them being worth full 30 marks of silver, for they are very large and fast, and acquire a capital amble. Dealers carry their horses to Kisi and Curmosa, two cities on the shores of the Sea of India, and there they meet with merchants who take the horses on to India for sale.

In this country there are many cruel and murderous people, so that no day passes but there is some homicide among them. Were it not for the Government, which is that of the Tartars of the Levant, they would do great mischief to merchants; and indeed, maugre the Government, they often succeed in doing such mischief. Unless merchants be well armed they run the risk of being murdered, or at least robbed of everything; and it sometimes happens that a whole party perishes in this way when not on their guard. The people are all Saracens, *i.e.* followers of the Law of Mahomet.<sup>3</sup>

In the cities there are traders and artizans who live by their labour and crafts, weaving cloths of gold, and silk stuffs of sundry kinds. They have plenty of cotton produced in the country; and abundance of wheat, barley, millet, panick, and wine, with fruit of all kinds. •

[Some one may say, "But the Sarāçens don't drink wine, which is prohibited by their law." The answer is that they gloss their text in this way, that if the wine be boiled, so that a part is dissipated and the rest becomes sweet, they may drink without breach of the commandment; for it is then no longer called wine, the name being changed with the change of flavour.<sup>4</sup>]

NOTE 1.—The following appear to be Polo's Eight Kingdoms :—

I. KAZWĪN; then a flourishing city, though I know not why he calls it a kingdom. Persian 'Irāk, or the northern portion thereof, seems intended. Previous to Hulāku's invasion Kazwīn seems to have been in the hands of the Ismaelites or Assassins.

II. KURDISTAN. I do not understand the difficulties of Marsden, followed by Lazari and Pauthier, which lead them to put forth that Kurdistan is not Kurdistan but something else. The boundaries of Kurdistan according to Hamdallah were Arabian 'Irak, Khuzistān, Persian 'Irak, Adherbaijan and Diarbekr (*Dict. de la P.* 480). Persian Kurdistan, in modern as in medieval times, extends south beyond Kirmanshah to the immediate border of Polo's next kingdom, viz. :

III. LŪR or LŪRISTĀN. This was divided into two principalities, Great Lūr and Little Lūr, distinctions still existing. The former was ruled by a Dynasty called the *Fashiyah* Atabegs, which endured from about 1155 to 1424. Their territory lay in the mountainous district immediately west of Ispahan, and extended to the river of Līzful, which parted it from Little Lūr. The stronghold of the Atabegs was the extraordinary hill fort of Mungasht, and they had a residence also at Aidhej or Mal-Amir in the mountains south of Shushan, where Ibn Batuta visited the reigning Prince in 1327. Sir H. Rawlinson has described Mungasht, and Mr. Layard and Baron de Bode have visited other parts, but the country is still very imperfectly known. Little Lūristān lay west of the R. Dizful, extending nearly to the Plain of Babylonia. Its Dynasty called Kurshid existed from the middle of the 12th to the end of the 16th century.

The Lūrs in language and otherwise appear to be akin to the Kurds. They were noted in the Middle Ages for their agility and their dexterity in thieving. The tribes of Little Lūr "do not affect the slightest veneration for Mahommed or the Koran; their only general object of worship is their great Saint Baba Buzurg," and particular disciples regard with reverence little short of adoration holy men looked on as living representatives of the Divinity. (*Ilchan.* I. 70 *seqq.*; *Rawlinson* in *J. R. G. S.* IX; *Layard* in *Do.* XVI. 75, 94; *N. et. E.* XIII. i. 330; *I. B.* II. 31; *D'Ohsson*, IV. 171-2.)

IV. SHŪLISTĀN, best represented by Ramusio's *Suolstan*, whilst the

old French texts have, *Cielstan* (i.e. Shelstán); the name applied to the country of the *Shúls*, or *Shauls*, a people who long occupied a part of Luristan, but were expelled by the Lúrs in the 12th century, and settled in the country between Shiraz and Khuzistan (now that of the Mamaseni, whom Colonel Pelly's information identifies with the Shúls), their central points being Naolánján and the fortress called Kala'a Safed or "White Castle." Ibn Batuta, going from Shiraz to Kazerun, encamped the first day in the country of the Shúls, "a Persian desert tribe which includes some pious persons." (*Q. R.* p. 385; *N. et E.* XIII. i. 332-3; *Itch.* I. 71; *J. R. G. S.* XIII. Map; *I. B.* II. 88.)

V. ISPAHAN? The name is in Ramusio *Spaan*, showing at least that he or some one before him had made this identification. The unusual combination *ff* in manuscript would be so like the frequent one *fi* that the change from Isfān to Istān would be easy. Another possible explanation is suggested by a passage in Abulfeda, who says that one of the cities which composed Isfahan was called *Shahristān*. As *Shahr* by itself signifies "city," it is just possible that Polo might take *Istān* for a proper name. (See *Reiske, Abulf.* III. 535.) But why *Istanit*?

VI. SHĪRĀZ, representing the province of Fars or Persia Proper, of which it has been for ages the chief city. The last dynasty that had reigned in Fars was that of the Salghur Aabegs, founded about the middle of the 12th century. Under Abubakr (1226-1260) this kingdom attained considerable power, embracing Fars, Kirman, the islands of the Gulf and its Arabian shores; and Shiraz then flourished in arts and literature. From about 1262, though a Salghurian princess, married to a son of Hulaku, had the nominal title of Aabeg, the province of Fars was under Mongol administration. (*Itch.* passim.)

VII. SHAWĀNKĀRA or Shabānkāra. The G. T. has *Soucara*, but the Crusca gives the true reading *Soncara*. It is the country of the Shawānkārs, a people coupled with the Shuls and Lurs in medieval Persian history, and like them of Kurd affinities. Their princes, of a family Fasldyah, are spoken of as influential before the Mahomedan conquest, but the name of the people comes prominently forward only during the Mongol era of Persian history. Their country lay to the south of the great salt lake east of Shiraz, and included Niriz and Darabjird, Fassa, Forg, and Tarem. Their capital was I'g or I'j, called also Irej, about 45 m. north of Darab, with a great mountain fortress; it was taken by Hulaku in 1259. The son of the prince was continued in nominal authority with Mongol administrators. In consequence of a rebellion in 1311 the dynasty seems to have been extinguished. A descendant attempted to revive their authority about the middle of the same century. The latest historical mention of the name that I have found is in Abdurazzāk's History of Shah Rukh, under the year H. 397 (1404). (See *Jour. As.* 3d s. vol. ii. 355.) But a note by Colonel Pelly informs me that the name Shabankara is still applied (1) to the district round the towns of Runis and Gauristan near Bender Abbas.

(2), to a village near Maiman, in the old country of the tribe; (3), to a tribe and district of Dashtistan, 38 farsakhs west of Shiraz.

With reference to the form in the text, *Soncara*, I may notice that in two passages of the *Masálah-ul-Absár*, translated by Quatremère, the name occurs as *Shankárah*. (*Q. R.* p. 380, 440 *seqq.*; *N. et E.* XIII. ; *Ilch.* I. 71 and *passim*; *Ouseley's Travels*, II. 158 *seqq.*)

VIII. TÚN-O-KÁIN, the eastern Kuhistán or Hill country of Persia, of which Tún and Káin are chief cities. The practice of indicating a locality by combining two names in this way is common in the East. Elsewhere in this book we find *Ariwra-Keshemur* and *Kes-macorán* (*Kij-Makrán*). Upper Sind is often called in India by the Sepoys *Rori-Bakkar*, from two adjoining places on the Indus; whilst in former days Lower Sind was often called *Diul-Sind*. *Karra-Mánikpúr*, *Uch-Multán*, *Kunduz-Baghlán* are other examples.

The exact expression *Tún-o-Káin* for the province here in question is used by Baber, and probably also by some of Hammer's authorities, judging from his mode of expression. (*Baber*, p. 204; see *Ilch.* II. 190; I. 95, 104, and *Hist. de l'Ordre des Assassins*, p. 245.)

I may note that the identification of *Suolstan* is due to Quatremère (see *N. et E.* XIII. i. circa p. 332); that of *Soncara* to Defréméry (*J. As.* ser. 4, tom. xi. p. 441);\* and that of *Tunocain* to M. Pauthier. It is one of the latter's happiest contributions to the elucidation of Polo.\* I may add that the *Lúrs*, the *Shúls*, and the *Shabankáras* are the subjects of three successive sections in the *Masálah-ul-Absár* of *Shahábuddín Dimishki*, a work which reflects much of Polo's geography (see *N. et E.* XIII. i. 330-333).

NOTE 2.—The horses exported to India, of which we shall hear more hereafter, were probably the same class of "Gulf Arabs" that are now carried thither. But the Turkman horses of Persia are also very valuable, especially for endurance. Kinneir speaks of one accomplishing 900 miles in 11 days, and Ferrier states a still more extraordinary feat from his own knowledge. In that case one of those horses went from Tehran to Tabriz, returned, and went again to Tabriz, within 12 days, including two days' rest. The total distance is about 1100 miles.

The *livre tournois* at this period was equivalent to a little over 18 francs of modern French silver. But in bringing the value to our modern gold standard we must add one-third, as the ratio of silver to gold was then 1 : 12 instead of 1 : 16. Hence the equivalent in gold of the *livre tournois* is very little less than 1*l.* sterling, and the price of the horse would be about 193*l.* The *Encyc. Britann.*, article "Money," gives the *livre tournois* of this period as 18*·*17 francs. A French paper in *Notes and Queries* (4th S. IV. 485) gives it under St. Lewis and

\* The same explanation was given in a note kindly sent for my use from Tabriz by Consul-General Abbott, evidently without having seen M. Pauthier's work.

Philip III. as equivalent to 18·24 fr., and under Philip IV. to 17·95. And lastly, experiment at the British Museum, made by the kind intervention of my friend Mr. Thomas, gave the weights of the *sols* of St. Lewis (1226-1270) and Philip IV. (1285-1314) respectively as 63 grains and 61½ grains of remarkably pure silver. These trials would give the *livres* (20 *sols*) as equivalent to 18·14 fr. and 17·70 fr. respectively.

Mr. Wright quotes an ordinance of Philip III. of France (1270-1285) fixing the maximum price that might be given for a palfrey at 60 *livres tournois*, and for a squire's *roncin* at 20 *livres*. Joinville, however, speaks of a couple of horses presented to St. Lewis in 1254 by the Abbot of Cluny, which he says would at the time of his writing (1309) have been worth 500 *livres* (the pair, it would seem). Hence it may be concluded in a general way that the *ordinary* price of imported horses in India approached that of the highest class of horses in Europe. (*Hist. of Dom. Manners*, p. 317; *Joinville*, p. 205.)

Twenty years ago a very fair Arab could be purchased in Bombay for 60*l.* or even less, but prices are much higher now.

With regard to the donkeys, according to Tavernier the fine ones used by merchants in Persia were imported from Arabia. The mark of silver was equivalent to about 44*s.* of our silver money, and allowing as before for the lower relative value of gold, 30 marks would be equivalent to 88*l.* sterling.

*Kisi* or Kish we have already heard of. *Curmosa* is Hormuz, of which we shall hear more. With a *Pisan*, as Rusticiano was, the sound of *c* is purely and strongly aspirate. Giovanni d'Empoli, in the beginning of the 16th century, another Tuscan, also calls it *Cormus* (see *Archiv. Stor. Ital.* Append. III. 81).

NOTE 3.—The character of the nomade and semi-nomade tribes of Persia in those days—Kurds, Lurs, Shuls, Karaunas, &c.—probably deserved all that Polo says, and it is not changed now. Take as an example Rawlinson's account of the Bakhtiyaris of Luristán: "I believe them to be individually brave, but of a cruel and savage character; they pursue their blood feuds with the most inveterate and exterminating spirit. . . . It is proverbial in Persia that the Bakhtiyaris have been compelled to forego altogether the reading of the *Fatihah* or prayer for the dead, for otherwise they would have no other occupation. They are also most dextrous and notorious thieves." (*J. R. G. S.* IX. 105.)

NOTE 4.—The Persians have always been lax in regard to the abstinence from wine.

In the preparation of some of the sweet wines of the Levant, such as that of Cyprus, the must is boiled, but I believe this is not the case generally in the East. Baber notices it as a peculiarity among the Kafirs of the Hindu Kush. Tavernier, however, says that at Shiraz, besides the wine for which that city was so celebrated, a good deal of *boiled wine* was manufactured, and used among the poor and by tra-

vellers. No doubt what is meant is the sweet liquor or syrup called *Dushdb*, which Della Valle says is just the Italian *Mostocotto*, but better, clearer, and not so mawkish (I. 689). (*Baber*, p. 145; *Tavernier*, Book V. ch. viii.)

## CHAPTER XVI.

### CONCERNING THE GREAT CITY OF YASDI.

YASDI also is properly in Persia; it is a good and noble city, and has a great amount of trade. They weave there quantities of a certain silk tissue known as *Yasdi*, which merchants carry into many quarters to dispose of. The people are worshippers of Mahommet.<sup>1</sup>

When you leave this city to travel further, you ride for seven days over great plains, finding cover to receive you at three places only. There are many fine woods [producing dates] upon the way, such as one can easily ride through; and in them there is great sport to be had in hunting and hawking, there being partridges and quails and abundance of other game, so that the merchants who pass that way have plenty of diversion. There are also wild asses, handsome creatures. At the end of those seven marches over the plain you come to a fine kingdom which is called Kerman.<sup>2</sup>

---

NOTE 1.—YEZD, an ancient city, supposed by D'Anville to be the *Isatichae* of Ptolemy, is not called by Marco a kingdom, though having a better title to the distinction than some which he classes as such. The atabegs of Yezd dated from the middle of the 11th century, and their dynasty was permitted by the Mongols to continue till the end of the 13th, when it was extinguished by Ghazan, and the administration made over to the Mongol Dewan.

Yezd, in pre-Mahomedan times, was a great sanctuary of the Gueber worship, though now it is a seat of fanatical Mahomedanism. It is, however, one of the few places where the old religion lingers. In 1859 there were reckoned 850 families of Guebers in Yezd and fifteen adjoining villages, but they diminish rapidly.

The silk manufactures still continue, and with other weaving employ

a large part of the population. The *Yazdi* which Polo mentions, finds a place in the Persian dictionaries, and is spoken of by D'Herbelot as *Kumsh-i-Yezdi*, "Yezd stuff." Yezd is still a place of important trade, and carries on a thriving commerce with India by Bandar Abbási. A visitor in the end of 1865 says: "The external trade appears to be very considerable, and the merchants of Yezd are reputed to be amongst the most enterprising and respectable of their class in Persia. Some of their agents have lately gone, not only to Bombay, but to the Mauritius, Java, and China."

(*Ich.* I. 67-8; *Khanikoff, Mém.* p. 202; *Report by Major R. M. Smith, R.E.*)

Yezd was visited by Friar Odoric, who calls it the third best city of the Persian emperor.

NOTE 2.—I fancy Della Valle correctly generalizes when he says of Persian travelling that "you always travel in a plain, but you always have mountains on either hand" (I. 462). The distance from Yezd to Kerman is, according to Khanikoff's survey, 314 *kilomètres*, or about 195 miles. Ramusio makes the time eight days, which is probably the better reading, giving a little over 24 m. a day. Westergaard in 1844 and Khanikoff in 1859, took *ten* days; Col. Goldsmid and Major Smith in 1865 *twelve*.

Khanikoff observes on this passage: "This notice of woods easy to ride through, covering the plain of Yezd, is very curious. Now you find it a plain of great extent indeed from N.W. to S.E., but narrow and arid; indeed I saw in it only thirteen inhabited spots, counting two caravanserais. Water for the inhabitants is brought from a great distance by subterraneous conduits, a practice which may have tended to desiccate the soil, for every trace of wood has completely disappeared."

Abbott travelled from Yezd to Kirman in 1849, by a road through Bafk, east of the usual road, which Khanikoff followed, and parallel to it; and it is worthy of note that he found circumstances more accordant with Marco's description. Before getting to Bafk he says of the plain that it "extends to a great distance north and south, and is probably twenty miles in breadth;" whilst Bafk "is remarkable for its groves of date-trees, in the midst of which it stands, and which occupy a considerable space." Further on he speaks of "wild tufts and bushes growing abundantly," and then of "thickets of the *Ghes* tree." He heard of the wild asses, but did not see any. In his report to the Foreign Office, alluding to Marco Polo's account, he says "It is still true that wild asses and other game are found in the wooded spots on the road." This is

*Kulan* of the Tartars  
*J. R. G. S.* XXV. 21



## CHAPTER XVII.

## CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF KERMAN.

KERMAN is a kingdom which is also properly in Persia, and formerly it had a hereditary prince. Since the Tartars conquered the country the rule is no longer hereditary, but the Tartar sends to administer whatever lord he pleases.<sup>1</sup> In this kingdom are produced the stones called turquoises in great abundance; they are found in the mountains, where they are extracted from the rocks.<sup>2</sup> There are also plenty of veins of steel and *Ondunique*.<sup>3</sup> The people are very skilful in making harness of war; their saddles, bridles, spurs, swords, bows, quivers, and arms of every kind, are very well made indeed according to the fashion of those parts. The ladies of the country and their daughters also produce exquisite needlework in the embroidery of silk stuffs in different colours, with figures of beasts and birds, trees and flowers, and a variety of other patterns. They work hangings for the use of noblemen so deftly that they are marvels to see, as well as cushions, pillows, quilts, and all sorts of things.<sup>4</sup>

In the mountains of Kerman are found the best falcons in the world. They are inferior in size to the Peregrine, red on the breast, under the neck, and between the thighs; their flight so swift that no bird can escape them.<sup>5</sup>

On quitting the city you ride on for seven days, always finding towns, villages, and handsome dwelling-houses, so that it is very pleasant travelling; and there is excellent sport also to be had by the way in hunting and hawking. When you have ridden those seven days over a plain country, you come to a great mountain; and when you have got to the top of the pass you find a great descent which occupies some two days to go down. All along you find a variety and abundance of fruits; and in former days there were plenty of inhabited places on the road, but now there are none; and you meet with only a few people looking

after their cattle at pasture. From the city of Kerman to this descent the cold in winter is so great that you can scarcely abide it, even with a great quantity of clothing.<sup>6</sup>

NOTE 1.—Kerman is mentioned by Ptolemy, and also by Ammianus amongst the cities of the country so called (*Carmania*): "*inter quas nitet Carmana omnium mater*" (XXIII. 6).

M. Pauthier's supposition that *Sirján*, and not the city now known as Kerman, was then the capital, is incorrect. (See as to this, passages from Abdurazzak in *N. et E.* XIV. 208, 290.) Our author's Kerman is the city still so called. According to Khanikoff's observations it stands at 5535 feet above the sea.

Kerman, on the fall of the Beni Búya dynasty in the middle of the 11th century, came into the hands of a branch of the Seljukian Turks, who retained it till the conquests of the Kings of Khwarizm, which just preceded the Mongol invasion. In 1226 the Amir Borrak, a Kara Khitaian, who was governor on behalf of Jaláluddín of Khwarizm, became independent under the title of Kutlugh Sultan. The Mongols allowed this family to retain the immediate authority, and at the time when Polo returned from China the representative of the house was a lady known as the *Pádishah Khátún*, the wife successively of the Ilkhans Abaka and Kaikhatu; an ambitious, clever, and masterful woman, who put her own brother Siyurgutinish to death as a rival, and was herself, after the decease of Kaikhatu, put to death by her brother's widow and daughter." The dynasty continued, nominally at least, to the reign of the Ilkhan Khodabanda (1304-13), when it was extinguished.

Kerman was a Nestorian see under the Metropolitan of Fars. (*Ich. passim.*; *Weil*, III. 454; *Lequien*, II. 1256.)

NOTE 2.—A MS. treatise on precious stones cited by Ouseley mentions *Shebarek* in Kerman as the site of a Turquoise mine. This is probably *Shahr-i-Babek*, about 100 miles west of the city of Kerman, and not far from *Pares*, where Abbott tells us there is a mine of these stones, now abandoned. Goebel, one of Khanikoff's party, found a deposit of turquoises at Taft near Yezd. (*Ouseley's Travels*, I. 211; *J. R. G. S.* XXVI. 63-65; *Khan. Mém.* 203.)

NOTE 3.—Iron mines are not noticed by modern travellers in Kerman. Edrisi, however, says that excellent iron was produced in the "Cold Mountains," N.W. of Jiruft, *i.e.* somewhere south of the capital; and the *Jihán Numá*, or Great Turkish Geography, says that the steel mines of Niriz on the borders of Kerman were famous. These are also spoken of by Teixeira. (*Edrisi*, vol. i. p. 430; *Hammer, Mém. sur la Perse*, p. 275; *Teixeira, Relaciones*, p. 378.)

*Ondanique* of the Geog. Text; *Andaine* of Pauthier's, *Andanicum* of

the Latin, is an expression on which no light has been thrown since Ramusio's time. The latter tells us that he had often asked the Persian merchants who visited Venicè, and they all agreed in stating that it was a sort of steel of such surpassing value and excellence, that in the days of yore a man who possessed a mirror, or sword, of *Andanic* regarded it as he would some precious jewel. This seems to me excellent evidence.

Avicenna, in his 5th book *De Animâ*, according to Roger Bacon, distinguishes three very different species of iron. 1st. Iron which is good for striking or bearing heavy strokes, and for being forged by hammer and fire, but not for cutting-tools. Of this hammers and anvils are made, and this is what we commonly call *Iron* simply. 2nd. That which is purer, has more heat in it, and is better adapted to take an edge and to form cutting-tools, but is not so malleable, viz. *Steel*. And the 3rd is that which is called *ANDENA*. This is less known among the Latin nations. Its special character is that like silver it is malleable and ductile under a very low degree of heat. In other properties it is intermediate between iron and steel (*Fr. R. Baconis Opera Inedita*, 1859, p. 382-3). The same passage, apparently, of Avicenna is quoted by Vincent of Beauvais, but with considerable differences (see *Speculum Naturale*, VII. ch. lii, lx., and *Specul. Doctrinale*, XV. ch. lxiii.).

The *Andena* here corresponds precisely to the *Andaine* of Pauthier's Text, and to the *Ondanique* of the G. T. I have retained the latter form because it points most distinctly to what I believe to be the real word, viz. *Hundwânîy*, "Indian Steel" (see *Johnson's Pers. Dict.* and De Sacy's *Crestomathie Arabe*, II. 148).

The same expression found its way into Spanish in the shapes of *Alhinde*, *Alfinde*, *Alinde*, first with the meaning of *steel*, then assuming, it would seem, that of *steel mirror*, and finally that of the metallic foil of a glass mirror (see *Dozy and Engelmann* 2d. ed. p. 144-145).

The sword-blades of India had a great fame over the East, and Indian steel continued to be imported into Persia till days quite recent, perhaps still continues. The fame of Indian steel goes back to very old times. Ctesias mentions two wonderful swords of such material that he got from the King of Persia and his mother. It is perhaps the *ferrum candidum* of which the Malli and Oxydracæ sent 100 talents weight as a present to Alexander. Indian Iron and Steel (σίδηρος Ινδικὸς καὶ σιδήριον) are mentioned in the 'Periplus' as imports into the Abyssinian ports. *Ferrum Indicum* appears (at least according to one reading) among the Oriental *species* subject to duty in the Law of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus on that matter. Salmasius notes that among surviving Greek chemical treatises there was one *περὶ βαφῆς Ἰνδικοῦ σιδήρου*, 'On the Tempering of Indian Steel.' Edrisi says on this subject: "The Hindus excel in the manufacture of iron, and in the preparation of those ingredients along with which it is fused to obtain that kind of mal-

leable Iron which is usually styled *Indian Steel*. They also have work-shops wherein are forged the most famous sabres in the world. . . . It is impossible to find anything to surpass the edge that you get from Indian Steel."

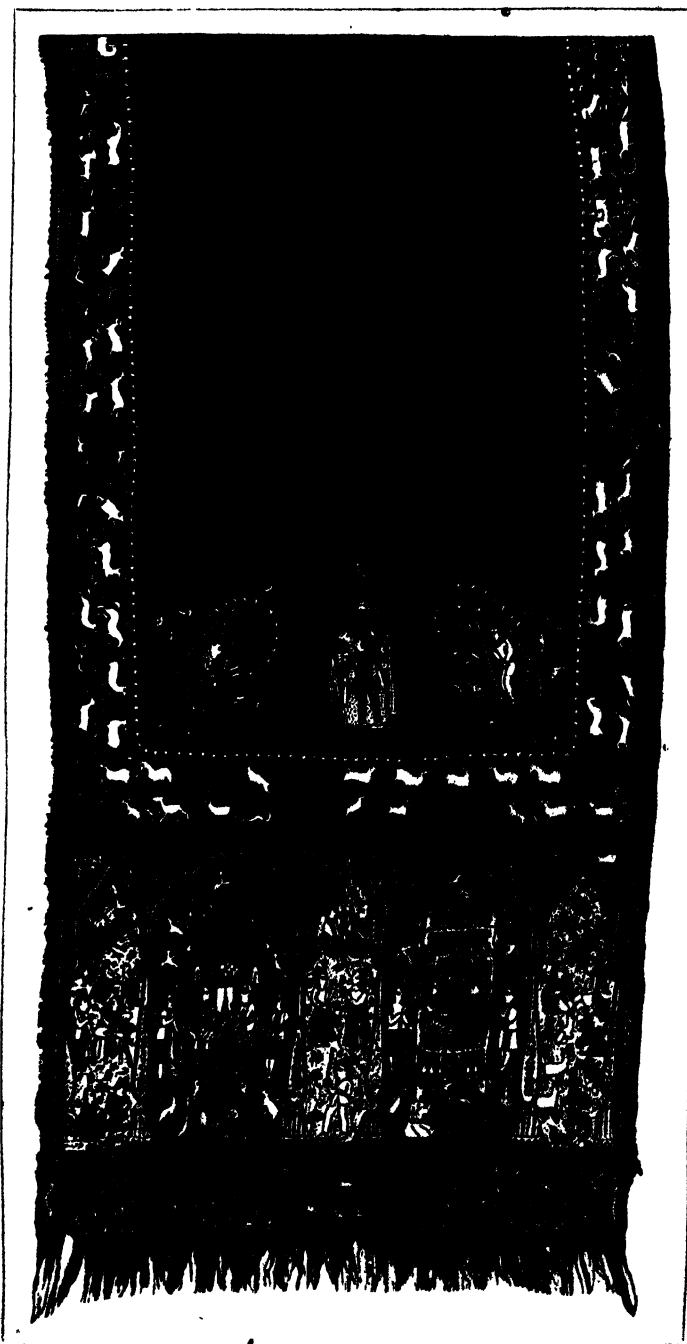
Klaproth in his '*Asia Polyglotta*' gives *Andun* as the Ossetish and *Andan* as the Wotiak, for Steel. Probably these are substantially the same word with *Andaine* and *Hundwānī*, pointing to India as the original source of supply.

The popular view at least, in the Middle Ages, seems to have regarded *Steel* as a distinct natural species, the product of a necessarily different *ore* from iron; and some such view is I suspect still common in the East. An old Indian officer told me of the reply of a native friend to whom he had tried to explain the conversion of iron into steel—"What? You would have me believe that if I put an ass into the furnace it will come forth a horse?" And Indian Steel again seems to have been regarded as a distinct natural species from ordinary steel. It is in fact made by a peculiar but simple process by which the iron is converted *directly* into cast-steel, without passing through any intermediate stage analogous to that of *blister-steel*. When specimens were first examined by chemists in England, several of them concluded that the steel was made direct from the *ore*, and had never been in the state of wrought-iron. The *Ondanique* of Marco, if really wrought from mines in Kerman, had no doubt some peculiar resemblance to the Indian article. (*Müller's Chsias*, p. 80; *Curtius*, IX. 24; *Müller's Geog. Gr. Min.* I. 262; *Digest. Novum*, Lugd. 1551, Lib. XXXIX. Tit. 4; *Salmas. Ex. Plinian.* II. 763; *Edrisi*, I. 65-66; *J. R. A. S. V.* 387 *seqq.*)

NOTE 4.—Paulus Jovius in the 16th century says, I know not on what authority, that Kerman was then celebrated for the fine temper of its steel in scymetars and lance-points. These were eagerly bought at high prices by the Turks, and their quality was such that one blow of a Kerman sabre would cleave an European helmet without turning the edge. (*Hist. of his own Time*, Bk. XIV.)

There is, or was in Pottinger's time, still a great manufacture of *match-locks* at Kerman; but rose-water, shawls, and carpets are the staples of the place now. Polo says nothing that points to shawl-making, but it would seem from Edrisi that some such manufacture already existed in the adjoining district of Bamm. It is possible that the "hangings" (*cortines*) spoken of by Polo may refer to the carpets. I have seen a genuine Kerman carpet in the house of my friend Sir Bartle Frere. It is of very short pile, very even and dense; the design unlike any other carpet I have seen; a combination of vases, birds, and floral tracery, closely resembling the illuminated frontispiece of some Persian MSS.

The shawls are inferior to those of Kashmir in fineness, but not in colour. In 1850, their highest quality did not exceed 30 *tomans* (14*l.*) in price. About 2200 looms were employed on the fabric. A good deal of Kerman wool, called *Kurk*, goes *via* Bandar Abbas and Karachi to



Texture, with Animals, &c., from a Cashmere Scarf in the India Museum.

Amritsar, where it is mixed with the genuine Tibetan wool in the shawl manufacture. The silk embroidery, of which Marco speaks, is still performed with great skill and beauty at Kerman. Our cut illustrates the textures figured with animals, already noticed at p. 63.

The Guebers were numerous here at the end of last century, but they are rapidly disappearing now. The Mussulman of Kerman is, according to Khanikoff, an epicurean gentleman, and even in regard to wine, which is strong and plentiful, his divines are liberal. "In other parts of Persia you find the scribblings on the walls of Serais to consist of philosophical axioms, texts from the Koran, or abuse of local authorities. From Kerman to Yezd you find only rhymes in praise of fair ladies or good wine."

(*Pottinger's Travels; Khanik. Mém.* 186 *seqq.*, and *Notice*, p. 21; *Major Smith's Report; Abbott's MS. Report* in F. O.)

NOTE 5.—Parez is famous for its falcons still, and so are the districts of Aktár and Sirján for those of the species called *Terlán*, esteemed the finest in Persia, and which Mr. Abbott identifies with those described in the text. Both he and Major Smith were entertained with hawking by Persian hosts in this neighbourhood. (*J. R. G. S.* XXV. 50, 63, and *Reports* by Abbott and Smith as above.)

NOTE 6.—We defer geographical remarks till the traveller reaches Hormuz.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

\* OF THE CITY OF CAMADI AND ITS RUINS; ALSO TOUCHING THE CARAUNA ROBBERS.

AFTER you have ridden down hill those two days, you find yourself in a vast plain, and at the beginning thereof there is a city called CAMADI, which formerly was a great and noble place, but now is of little consequence, for the Tartars in their incursions have several times ravaged it. The plain whereof I speak is a very hot region; and the province that we now enter is called REOBARLES.

The fruits of the country are dates, pistachioes, and apples of Paradise, with others of the like not found in our cold climate. [There are vast numbers of turtle-doves, attracted by the abundance of fruits, but the Saracens

never take them, for they hold them in abomination.] And on this plain there is a kind of bird called francolin, but different from the francolin of other countries, for their colour is a mixture of black and white, and the feet and beak are vermilion colour.<sup>1</sup>

The beasts also are peculiar; and first I will tell you of their oxen. These are very large, and all over white as snow; the hair is very short and smooth, which is owing to the heat of the country. The horns are short and thick, not sharp in the point; and between the shoulders they have a round hump some two palms high. There are no handsomer creatures in the world. And when they have to be loaded, they kneel like the camel; once the load is adjusted, they rise. Their load is a heavy one, for they are very strong animals. Then there are sheep here as big as asses; and their tails are so large and fat, that one tail shall weigh some 30 lbs. They are fine fat beasts, and afford capital mutton.<sup>2</sup>

In this plain there are a number of villages and towns which have lofty walls of mud, made as a defence against the banditti,<sup>3</sup> who are very numerous, and are called CARAONAS. This name is given them because they are the sons of Indian mothers by Tartar fathers. And you must know that when these Caraonas wish to make a plundering incursion, they have certain devilish enchantments whereby they do bring darkness over the face of day, insomuch that you can scarcely discern your comrade riding beside you; and this darkness they will cause to extend over a space of seven days' journey. They know the country thoroughly, and ride abreast, keeping near one another, sometimes to the number of 10,000, at other times more or fewer. In this way they extend across the whole plain that they are going to harry, and catch every living thing that is found outside of the towns and villages; man, woman, or beast, nothing can escape them! The old men whom they take in this way they butcher; the young men and the women

they sell for slaves in other countries; thus the whole land is ruined, and has become well nigh a desert.

The King of these scoundrels is called NOGODAR. This Nogodar had gone to the Court of Chagatai, who was own brother to the Great Kaan, with some 10,000 horsemen of his, and abode with him; for Chagatai was his uncle. And whilst there this Nogodar devised a most audacious enterprise, and I will tell you what it was. He left his uncle who was then in Greater Armenia, and fled with a great body of horsemen, cruel unscrupulous fellows, first through BADASHAN, and then through another province called PASHAI-DIR, and then through another called ARIORA-KESHEMUR. There he lost a great number of his people and of his horses, for the roads were very narrow and perilous. And when he had conquered all those provinces, he entered India at the extremity of a province called DALIVAR. He established himself in that city and government which he took from the King of the country, ASEDIN SOLDAN by name, a man of great power and wealth. And there abideth Nogodar with his army, afraid of nobody, and waging war with all the Tartars in his neighbourhood.<sup>4</sup>

Now that I have told you of those scoundrels and their history, I must add the fact that Messer Marco himself was all but caught by their bands in such a darkness as that I have told you of; but, as it pleased God, he got off and threw himself into a village that was hard by, called CONOSALMI. Howbeit he lost his whole company except seven persons who escaped along with him. The rest were caught, and some of them sold, some put to death.<sup>5</sup>

NOTE 1.—The apples of Paradise are plantains. Ramusio has "Adam's apple." This was some kind of *Citrus*, though Lindley thinks it impossible to say precisely what. According to Jacques de Vitry it was a beautiful fruit of the Citron kind, in which the bite of human teeth was plainly discernible (Note to *Vulgar Errors*, II, 211; *Bongars's*, I, 1099). Mr. Abbot speaks of this tract as "the districts (of Kerman)



lying towards the South, which are termed the Ghermseer or Hot Region, where the temperature of winter resembles that of a charming spring, and where the palm, orange, and lemon-tree flourish." (*MS. Report*; see also *J. R. G. S.* XXV. 56).

The Francolin here spoken of is, as Major Smith tells me, the *Darrá* of the Persians, the *Black Partridge* of English sportsmen, sometimes called the Red-legged Francolin. The *Darrá* is found in some parts of Egypt where its peculiar call is interpreted by the peasantry into certain Arabic words, meaning "Sweet are the corn-ears! Praised be the Lord!" In India, Baber tells us, the call of the Black Partridge was less piously rendered "*Shir dāram shakrak*," "I've got milk and sugar!"

(*Crestomathie Arabe*, II. 295; *Baber*, 320.)

NOTE 2.—Abbott mentions the humped (though small) oxen in this part of Persia, and that in some of the neighbouring districts they are taught to kneel to receive the load, an accomplishment which seems to have struck Mas'udi (III. 27), who says he saw it exhibited by oxen at Rai (near modern Tehran). The Afn Akbari also ascribes it to a very fine breed in Bengal. The whimsical name *Zebu*, given to the humped or Indian ox in books of Zoology, was taken by Buffon from the exhibitors of such a beast at a French Fair.

The fat-tailed sheep is well known in many parts of Asia, and part of Africa. It is mentioned by Ctesias, and by Ælian, who says the shepherds used to extract the tallow from the live animal, sewing up the tail again. Marco's statements as to size do not surpass those of the admirable Kämpfer: "In size they so much surpass the common sheep that it is not unusual to see them as tall as a donkey, whilst all are much more than three feet; and as to the tail I shall not exceed the truth, though I may exceed belief, if I say that it sometimes reaches 40 lbs. in weight." (*Ælian, Nat. An.* III. 3, IV. 32; *Amoen. Exoticae*.)

NOTE 3.—The word rendered *banditti* is in Pauthier *Carans*, in G. Text *Caraunes*, in the Latin "*a scaranis et malandrinis*." The last is no doubt correct, standing for the old Italian *Scherani*, bandits or troopers (see *Cathay*, p. 287 note).

NOTE 4.—This is a knotty subject, and needs a long note.

The KARAUNAHS or *Kardwinahs*, are mentioned often in the histories of the Mongol regime in Persia, first as a Mongol tribe forming a *Tuman*, i.e. a division or corps of 10,000 in the Mongol army (and I suspect it was the phrase the *Tuman of the Karaunahs* in Marco's mind that suggested his repeated use of the number 10,000 in speaking of them); and afterwards as daring and savage freebooters, scouring the Persian provinces, and having their head-quarters on the Eastern frontiers of Persia. They are described as having had their original seats on the mountains north of the Chinese wall near *Karān Jidun* or

*Khidun*; and their special accomplishment in war was the use of Naphtha Fire. Rashiduddin mentions the *Karânūt* as a branch of the great Mongol tribe of the *Kunḡuráts*, who certainly had their seat in the vicinity named, so these may possibly be connected with the *Karau-nahs*. The same author says that the Tuman of the *Karau-nahs* formed the *In'it* or *peculium* of Arghún Khan. Wassáf calls them "a kind of goblins rather than human beings, the most daring of all the Mongols," and Mirkhond speaks in like terms.

Dr. Bird of Bombay, in discussing some of the Indo-Scythic coins which bear the word *Korano* attached to the prince's name, asserts this to stand for the name of the *Karau-nah* "who were a Græco-Indo-Scythic tribe of robbers in the Punjab, who are mentioned by Marco Polo," a somewhat hasty conclusion which Pauthier adopts. There is, Quatremère observes, no mention of the *Karau-nahs* before the Mongol invasion, and this he regards as the great obstacle to any supposition of their having been a people previously settled in Persia. Reiske, with no reference to the present subject, quotes a passage from Hamza of Ispahan, a writer of the tenth century, in which mention is made of certain troops called *Kardunahs*. But it seems certain that in this and other like cases the real reading was *Kazáwináh*, people of Kazwin. (See *Reiske's Constant. Porphyrog.* Bonn, ed. LL. 674; *Gottwaldt's Hamza Ispahanensis*, p. 161; and *Quatremère* in *J. A.* ser. 5, tom. xv. 173.) Ibn Batuta only once mentions the name, saying that Tughlak Sháh of Dehli, was "one of those Turks called *Karaunas* who dwell in the mountains between Sind and Turkestan." Hammer has suggested the derivation of the word *Carbine* from *Kardáwináh*, and a link in such an etymology is furnished by the fact that in the 16th century the word *Carbine* was used for some kind of irregular horseman.

(*Gold. Horde*, 214; *Ilch.* I. 17, 344, &c.; *Erdmann*, 168, 199, &c.; *Q. R.* 130; *Not. et Ext.* XIV. 282; *J. B.* III. 201; *Ed. Webbé, his Travailes*, p. 17, 1590, Reprinted 1868.)

As regards the account given by Marco of the origin of the *Caraonas*, it seems almost necessarily a mistaken one. As Khanikoff remarks, he might have confounded them with the Biluchis, whose Turanian aspect (at least as regards the Brahuis) shows a strong infusion of Turki blood, and who might be rudely described as a cross between Tartars and Indians. It is indeed an odd fact that the word *Kardni* (vulgo *Cranny*) is commonly applied in India at this day to the mixed race sprung from European fathers and Native mothers, and this might be cited in corroboration of Marsden's reference to the Sanskrit *Karana*, but I suspect the coincidence arises in another way. *Karana* is, according to Wilson, the son of a Sudra woman by a Vaisya (or as Gen. Cunningham maintains, a mongrel Kshatriya). An occupation of this class was writing and keeping accounts, and hence the word came to mean a writer or scribe. In this sense we find *Kardni* applied in Ibn Batuta's day to a ship's clerk, and it is used in the same sense in the *Aln Akbari*,

Clerkship is also the predominant occupation of the East-Indians, and hence the term *Karání* is applied to them from their business, and not from their mixed blood. We shall see hereafter that there is a Tartar term *Arghin*, applied to fair children born of a Mongol mother and white father; it is possible that there may have been a correlative word like *Kardun* applied to dark children born of Mongol father and black mother, and that this led Marco to a false theory.

Let us turn now to the name of Nogodar. Contemporaneously with the Karaunahs we have frequent mention of predatory bands known as *Nigudarís*, who seem to be distinguished from the *Karaunahs*, but had a like character for truculence. Their head-quarters were about *Sijistán*, and *Quatremère* seems disposed to look upon them as a tribe indigenous in that quarter. Hammer says they were originally the troops of Prince *Nigudar*, grandson of *Chaghatai*, and that they were a rabble of all sorts, Mongols, Turkmans, Kurds, Shuls, and what not. We hear of their revolts and disorders down to 1319, under which date *Mirkhond* says that there had been one-and-twenty fights with them in four years. Again we hear of them in 1336 about *Herat*, whilst in *Baber's* time they turn up as *Nukdari*, fairly established as tribes in the mountainous tracts of *Karnud* and *Ghur*, west of *Kabul*, and coupled with the *Hazáras*, who still survive both in name and character. "Among both," says *Baber*, "there are some who speak the Mongol language." The *Hazáras* are eminently Mongol in feature to this day, and it is very probable that they or some part of them are the descendants of the *Karaunahs* or the *Nigudarís*, or of both, and that the origination of the bands so called from the scum of the Mongol inundation is thus in degree confirmed. It is worthy of notice that *Abul Fazl*, who also mentions the *Nukdarís* among the nomad tribes of *Kabul*, says the *Hazáras* were the remains of the *Chaghataian* army which *Mangu Kaan* sent to the aid of *Hulaku* under the command of *Nigudar Oghlan*. (*Not. et Ext.* XIV. 284; *Ilch.* I. 284, 309, &c.; *Baber*, 134, 136, 140; *J. As.* ser. 4, tom. iv. 98; *Ayeeen Akbery*, II. 192-3.)

So far, excepting as to the doubtful point of the relation between *Karaunahs* and *Nigudarís*, and as to the origin of the former, we have a general accordance with *Polo's* representations. But it is not very easy to identify with certainty the inroad on *India* to which he alludes, or the person intended by *Nogodar*, nephew of *Chaghatai*. It seems as if two persons of that name had each contributed something to *Marco's* history.

We find in *Hammer* and *D'Ohsson* that one of the causes which led to the war between *Barka Khan* and *Hulaku* in 1262 (see above, *Prologue*, chap. ii.) was the violent end that had befallen three princes of the House of *Juji*, who had accompanied *Hulaku* to *Persia* in command of the contingent of that House. When war actually broke out, the contingent made their escape from *Persia*. One party gained *Kipchak* by way of *Derbend*; another, in greater force, led by *NIGUDAR* and *Ongujs*, escaped to *Khorasan*, pursued by the troops of *Hulaku*, and

thence eastward, where they seized upon Ghazni and other districts upon the borders of India.

But again: Nigudar Aghul, or Oghlan, son of (the younger) Juji, son of *Chaghatai*, was the leader of the Chaghataian contingent in Hulaku's expedition, and was still attached to the Mongol-Persian army in 1269, when Borrak Khan, of the House of Chaghatai, was meditating war against his kinsman, Abaka of Persia. Borrak sent to the latter an ambassador who was the bearer of a secret message to Prince Nigudar, begging him not to serve against the head of his own House. Nigudar, upon this, made a pretext of retiring to his own head-quarters in *Georgia*, hoping to reach Borrak's camp by way of Derbend. He was, however, intercepted, and lost many of his people. With 1000 horse he took refuge in Georgia, but was refused an asylum, and was eventually captured by Abaka's commander on that frontier. His officers were executed, his troops dispersed among Abaka's army, and his own life spared under surveillance. I find no more about him. In 1278 Hammer speaks of him as dead, and of the Nigudarian bands as having been formed out of his troops. But authority is not given.

The second Nigudar is evidently the one to whom Abu'l Fazl alludes. Khanikoff assumes that the Nigudar who went off towards India about 1260 (he puts the date earlier) was Nigudar the grandson of Chaghatai, but he takes no notice of the second story just quoted.

In the former story we have bands under *Nigudar* going off by Ghazni, and conquering country on the Indian frontier. In the latter we have *Nigudar*, a descendant of Chaghatai, trying to escape from his camp on the frontier of Great Armenia. Supposing the Persian historians to be correct, it looks as if Marco had rolled two stories into one.

Some other passages may be cited before quitting this part of the subject. A chronicle of Herat, translated by Barbier de Meynard, says, under 1298: "The King Fakhruddin (of Herat) had the imprudence to authorize the *Amir Nigudar* to establish himself in a quarter of the city, with 300 adventurers from Irak. This little troop made frequent raids in Kuhistan, Sijistan, Farrah, &c., spreading terror. Khodabunda, at the request of his brother Ghazan Khan, came from Mazanderan to demand the immediate surrender of these brigands," &c. And in the account of the tremendous foray of the Chaghataian Prince Kotlogh Shah on the east and south of Persia in 1299, we find one of his captains called *Nigudar* Bahadur. (*Gold. Horde*, 146, 157, 164; *D'Ohsson*, IV. 378 seqq., 433 seqq., 513 seqq.; *Ich.* I. 216, 261, 284; II. 104; *J. A.* ser. 5, tom. xvii. 455-6, 507; *Khan. Notice*, 31.)

As regards the route taken by Prince Nogodar in his incursion into India, we have no difficulty with BADAQSHAN. PASHAI-DIR is a copulate name, the former part, as we shall see reason to believe hereafter, representing the country between the Hindu Kush and the Kabul River (see *infra*, chap. xxx.), the latter (as Pauthier already has pointed out), DIR, the chief town of Panjkora, in the hill country north of Peshawar.

In *Ariora-Keshemur* the first portion only is perplexing. I will mention the most probable of the solutions that have occurred to me, and a second, due to that eminent archæologist, Gen. A. Cunningham. (1) *Ariora* may be some corrupt or Mongol form of *Aryavartta*, a sacred name applied to the Holy Lands of Indian Buddhism, of which Kashmir was eminently one to the Northern Buddhists. *Oron*, in Mongol, is a Region or Realm, and may have taken the place of *Vartta*, giving *Aryoron* or *Ariora*. (2) "*Ariora*," Gen. Cunningham writes, "I take to be the *Harhaura* of Sanscrit—i.e. the Western Panjáb. *Harhaura* was the North-Western Division of the *Nava-Khanda*, or Nine Divisions of Ancient India. It is mentioned between *Sindhu-Sauvira* in the west (i.e. Sind), and *Madra* in the north (i.e. the Eastern Panjab, which is still called *Madar-Des*). The name of *Harhaura* is, I think, preserved in the Haro River. Now, the Sind-Sagor Doab formed a portion of the kingdom of Kashmir, and the joint names, like those of *Sindhu-Sauvira*, describe only one State." The names of the nine divisions in question are given by the celebrated astronomer Varaha Mihira, who lived in the beginning of the 6th century, and are repeated by Al Biruni (see *Reinaud, Mém. sur l'Inde*, p. 116). The only objection to this happy solution seems to lie in Al Biruni's remark, that the names in question were in general no longer used even in his time (A.D. 1030). This however is not conclusive, for the joint title may have remained attached to the State of Kashmir in neighbouring countries long after one portion of it had ceased in India itself to be a living name. *Sodor* and *Man* is a parallel case.

There can be no doubt that *Asidin Soldan* is, as Khanikoff has said, Ghaïassuddin Balban, Sultan of Dehli from 1266 to 1286, and for years before that a man of great power in India, and especially in the Panjab, of which he had in the reign of Ruknuddin (1236) held independent possession. His name is sometimes written *'Isuddin* (see *Elliot*, II. 343, 350).

Firishta records several inroads of Mongols in the Panjab during the reign of Ghaïassuddin, in withstanding one of which that King's eldest son was slain, and there are constant indications of their presence in Sind till the end of the century. But we find in that historian no hint of the chief circumstances of this part of the story, viz., the conquest of Kashmir and the occupation of *Dilavar*, evidently (whatever its identity) a place in the plains of India. I do find, however, in the history of Kashmir, as given by Lassen (III. 1138), that, in the end of 1259, Lakshamana Deva, King of Kashmir, was killed in a campaign against the *Turushka* (Turks or Tartars), and that their leader, who is called *Kajjala*, got hold of the country and held it till 1287. It is difficult not to connect this both with Polo's story and with the escapade of Nigudar about 1260, noting also that this occupation of Kashmir extended through the whole reign of Ghaïassuddin.

We still have to account for the occupation and locality of *Dilavar*;

Marsden supposed it to be *Lahore*; Khanikoff considers it to be *Dirdwal* or *Dilāwar*, in the modern state of Bhāwalpūr. Such lengthened occupation as Marco implies seems, as regards the former, never to have occurred; as regards the latter solution, we have scarcely data for making the same objection. But another has been suggested by Gen. Cunningham's ample stores of knowledge. He says, in a note with which he has favoured me: "I traced the coins of Hasan Karluk and his son Mahomed (supposed to have ruled about the middle of the 13th century) to DILĀWAR as their chief seat. This Dilawar is on the west bank of the Jelam, close to Dārāpūr, which was visited by Burnes and Court. I visited the place myself in 1834, and I was satisfied that Dilawar and Darapur must have been the capital of the Western Panjab. I think also that it must have been the Bukephala of Alexander. It is opposite Mung" (which Gen. C. identifies with *Nikaia*) "but a little higher up the river." It is, in fact, just opposite to the battlefield of Chilianwāla. The spot has been recently visited (Dec. 15th, 1868) at my request, by my friend Col. R. Maclagan, R.E. He writes: "The present village of Dilāwar stands a little above the town of Darapur (I mean on higher ground), looking down on Darapur and on the river, and on the cultivated and wooded plain along the river bank. The remains of the Old Dilawar, in the form of quantities of large bricks, cover the low round-backed spurs and knolls of the broken rocky hills around the present village, but principally on the land side. They cover a large area of very irregular character, and may clearly be held to represent a very considerable town. There are no indications of the form of buildings . . . but simply large quantities of large bricks, which for a long time have been carried away and used for modern buildings. . . . After rain coins are found on the surface. We got some of them from the people of the village, all small, of copper, with old Arabic characters, two of them having something like a rude outline of a horse, but this is not quite certain. . . . There can be no doubt of a very large extent of ground, of very irregular and uninviting character, having been covered at some time with buildings. The position on the Jelam would answer well for the Dilawar which the Mongol invaders took and held. . . . The strange thing is that the name should not be mentioned (I believe it is not) by any of the well-known Mohammedan historians of India. So much for Dilawar. . . . The people have no traditions. But there are the remains; and there is the name, borne by the existing village on part of the old site." I had come to the conclusion that this was almost certainly Polo's Dilavar, and had mapped it as such, before I read certain passages in the History of Ziyaoddin Barni, which have been translated by Professor Dowson for the third volume of Elliot's 'India.' When the comrades of Ghaissuddin Balban urged him to conquests, the Sultan pointed to the constant danger from the Mongols, saying: "These accursed wretches have heard of the wealth and condition of Hindustan

and have set their hearts upon conquering and plundering it. *They have taken and plundered Lahor within my territories, and no year passes that they do not come here and plunder the villages. . . .* They even talk about the conquest and sack of Dehli." And under a later date the historian says: "The Sultan . . . marched to Lahor, and ordered the rebuilding of the fort which the Mughals had destroyed in the reigns of the sons of Shamsuddin. The towns and villages of Lahor which the Mughals had devastated and laid waste he repeopled." Considering these passages, and the fact that Polo had no personal knowledge of Upper India, I now think it possible that Marsden was right, and that *Dilivār* is really a misunderstanding of "*Città di Livar*" for *Lahāwar* or Lahore.

The *Magical darkness* which Marco ascribes to the evil arts of the Caraunas is explained by Khanikoff from the phenomenon of *Dry Fog* which he has often experienced in Khārasan, combined with the *Dust Storm* with which we are familiar in Upper India. In Sind these phenomena often produce a great degree of darkness. During a battle fought between the armies of Sindh and Kachh in 1762, such a fog came on, obscuring the light of day for some six hours, during which the armies were intermixed with one another and fighting desperately. When the darkness dispersed they separated, and the consternation of both parties was so great at the events of the day that both made a precipitate retreat. In 1844 this battle was still spoken of with wonder. (*J. Bomb. Br. R.A.S.* I. 423.)

The belief that such opportune phenomena were produced by enchantment was a thoroughly Tartar one. D'Herbelot relates (art. *Giagathai*) that in an action with a rebel called Mahomet Tarabi, the Mongols were encompassed by a dust-storm which they attributed to enchantment on the part of the enemy, and it so discouraged them that they took to flight.

NOTE 5.—The specification that only *seven* were saved from Marco's company is peculiar to Pauthier's Text, not appearing in the G.T.

Several names compounded of *Salm* or *Salmi* occur on the dry lands on the borders of Kerman. Edrisi, however (I. p. 428), names a place called KANĀT-UL-SHĀM as the first march in going from Jiruft to Walashjird. Walashjird is, I imagine, represented by *Galashkird*, Major R. Smith's third march from Jiruft (see my map of routes from Kerman to Hormuz); and as such an indication agrees perfectly with the view taken below of Polo's route, I am strongly disposed to identify Kanāt-ul-Shām with his *castello* or walled village of *Canosalmi*.

The raids of the Mekranis and Biluchis long preceded those of the Caraunas, for they were notable even in the time of Mahmud of Ghazni, and they have continued to our own day to be prosecuted nearly on the same stage and in the same manner. About 1721, 4000 horsemen of this description plundered the town of Bander Abbasi, whilst Capt. Alex. Hamilton was in the port; and Abbott, in 1850,

found the dread of Biluch robbers to extend almost to the gates of Ispahan (see *Hamilton*, l. 109; *J.R.G.S.* XXV.; *Khanikoff's Mémoire*; *Macd. Kinneir*, 196).

## CHAPTER XIX.

### OF THE DESCENT TO THE CITY OF HORMOS.

THE Plain of which we have spoken extends in a southerly direction for five days' journey, and then you come to another descent some twenty miles in length, where the road is very bad and full of peril, for there are many robbers and bad characters about. When you have got to the foot of this descent you find another beautiful plain called the PLAIN OF FORMOSA. This extends for two days' journey; and you find in it fine streams of water with plenty of date-palms and other fruit-trees. There are also many beautiful birds, francolins, popinjays, and other kinds such as we have none of in our country. When you have ridden these two days, you come to the Ocean Sea, and on the shore you find a city with a harbour which is called HORMOS.<sup>1</sup> Merchants come thither from India, with ships loaded with spicery and precious stones, pearls, cloths of silk and gold, elephants' teeth, and many other wares, which they sell to the merchants of Hormos, and which these in turn carry all over the world to dispose of again. In fact, 'tis a city of immense trade. There are plenty of towns and villages under it, but it is the capital. The King is called RUOMEDAM AHOMET. It is a very sickly place, and the heat of the sun is tremendous. If any foreign merchant dies there, the King takes all his property.

In this country they make a wine of dates mixt with spices, which is very good. When any one not used to it first drinks this wine, it causes repeated and violent



purging, but afterwards he is all the better for it and gets fat upon it. The people never eat meat and wheaten bread except when they are ill, and if they take such food when they are in health it makes them ill. Their food when in health consists of dates and salt-fish (tunny, to wit) and onions, and this kind of diet they maintain in order to preserve their health.<sup>2</sup>

Their ships are wretched affairs, and many of them get lost; for they have no iron fastenings, and are only stitched together with twine made from the husk of the Indian nut. They beat this husk until it becomes like horse-hair, and from that they spin twine, and with this stitch the planks of the ships together. It keeps well, and is not corroded by the sea-water, but it will not stand well in a storm. The ships are not pitched, but are rubbed with fish-oil. They have one mast, one sail, and one rudder, and have no deck, but only a cover spread over the cargo when loaded. This cover consists of hides, and on the top of these hides they put the horses which they take to India for sale. They have no iron to make nails of, and for this reason they use only wooden trenails in their shipbuilding, and then stitch the planks with twine as I have told you. Hence 'tis a perilous business to go a voyage in one of those ships, and many of them are lost, for in that Sea of India the storms are often terrible.<sup>3</sup>

The people are black, and are worshippers of Mahommet. The residents avoid living in the cities, for the heat in summer is so great that it would kill them. Hence they go out (to sleep) at their gardens in the country, where there are streams and plenty of water. For all that they would not escape but for one thing that I will mention. The fact is, you see, that in summer a wind often blows across the sands which encompass the plain, so intolerably hot that it would kill everybody were it not that when they perceive that wind coming they plunge into water up to the neck, and so abide until the wind have ceased.<sup>4</sup>

[And to prove the great heat of this wind, Messer Mark related a case that befel when he was there. The Lord of Hormos, not having paid his tribute to the King of Kerman, the latter resolved to claim it at the time when the people of Hormos were residing away from the city. So he caused a force of 1600 horse and 5000 foot to be got ready, and sent them by the route of Reobarles to take the others by surprise. Now, it happened one day that through the fault of their guide they were not able to reach the place appointed for their night's halt, and were obliged to bivouac in a wilderness not far from Hormos. In the morning as they were starting on their march they were caught by that wind, and every man of them was suffocated, so that not one survived to carry the tidings to their Lord. When the people of Hormos heard of this they went forth to bury the bodies lest they should breed a pestilence. But when they laid hold of them by the arms to drag them to the pits, the bodies proved to be so *baked*, as it were, by that tremendous heat, that the arms parted from the trunks, and in the end the people had to dig graves hard by each where it lay, and so cast them in.]

The people sow their wheat and barley and other corn in the month of November, and reap it in the month of March. The dates are not gathered till May, but otherwise there is no grass nor any other green thing, for the excessive heat dries up everything.

When any one dies they make a great business of the mourning, for women mourn their husbands four years. During that time they mourn at least once a day, gathering together their kinsfolk and friends and neighbours for the purpose, and making a great weeping and wailing. [And they have women who are mourners by trade, and do it for hire.]

Now, we will quit this country. I shall not, however, now go on to tell you about India; but when time and

place shall suit we shall come round from the north and tell you about it. For the present, let us return by another road to the aforesaid city of Kerman, for we cannot get at those countries that I wish to tell you about except through that city.

I should tell you first, however, that King Ruomedam Ahomet of Hormos, which we are leaving, is a liegeman of the King of Kerman.<sup>6</sup>

On the road by which we return from Hormos to Kerman you meet with some very fine plains, and you also find many natural hot baths; you find plenty of partridges on the road; and there are towns where victual is cheap and abundant, with quantities of dates and other fruits. The wheaten bread, however, is so bitter, owing to the bitterness of the water, that no one can eat it who is not used to it. The baths that I mentioned have excellent virtues; they cure the itch and several other diseases.<sup>7</sup>

Now, then, I am going to tell you about the countries towards the north, of which you shall hear in regular order. Let us begin.

NOTE 1.—Having now arrived at HORMÜZ, it is time to see what can be made of the geography of the route from Kerman to that port.

The port of Hormuz at this time stood upon the main land. A few years later it was transferred to the island which became so famous, under circumstances which are concisely related by Abulfeda:—"Hormuz is the port of Kerman, a city rich in palms, and very hot. One who has visited it in our day tells me that the ancient Hormuz was devastated by the incursions of the Tartars, and that its people transferred their abode to an island in the sea called Zarun, near the continent, and lying west of the old city. At Hormuz itself no inhabitants remain, but some of the lowest order" (in *Büsching*, IV. 261-2). Friar Odoric, about 1321, found Hormuz "on an island some five miles distant from the main." Ibn Batuta, some eight or nine years later, discriminates between Hormuz or Moghistan on the mainland, and New Hormuz on the Island of Jeraun, but describes only the latter, already a great and rich city.

\* The site of the Island Hormuz has often been visited and described; but I could find no published trace of any traveller having verified the site of the more ancient city. An application to Colonel Pelly, the very able British Resident at Bushire, brought me from his own personal

knowledge the information that I sought, and the following particulars are compiled from the letters with which he has favoured me :—

“The ruins of Old Hormuz, well known as such, stand several miles up a creek, and in the centre of the present district of Minao. They are extensive, though in large part obliterated by long cultivation over the site, and the traces of a long pier or Bandar were pointed out to Colonel Pelly. They are about six or seven miles from the fort of Minao, and the Minao river, or its stony bed, winds down towards them. The creek is quite traceable, but is silted up, and to embark goods you have to go a farsakh towards the sea, where there is a custom-house on that part of the creek which is still navigable. Colonel Pelly collected a few bricks from the ruins. From the mouth of the Old Hormuz creek to the New Hormuz town, or town of Thumpak on the island of Hormuz, is a sail of about three farsakhs. It may be a trifle more, but any native tells you at once that it is three farsakhs from Hormuz island to the creek where you land to go up to Minao. *Hormuzdia* was the name of the region in the days of its prosperity. Some people say that Hormuzdia was known as *Jerunia*, and Old Hormuz town as *Jerun*.” (In this I suspect tradition has gone astray). “The town and fort of Minao lie to the N.E. of the ancient city, and are built upon the lowest spur of the Bashkurd mountains, commanding a gorge through which the Rudbar river debouches on the plain of Hormuzdia.” In these new and interesting particulars it is pleasing to find such precise corroboration both of Edrisi and of Ibn Batuta. The former, writing in the 12th century, says that Hormuz stood on the banks of a canal or creek from the Gulf, by which vessels came up to the city. The latter specifies the breadth of sea between Old and New Hormuz as *three farsakhs*. (*Edrisi*, I. 424 ; *I. B.* II. 230.)

I now proceed to recapitulate the main features of Polo's Itinerary from Kerman to Hormuz. We have :—

	Marches.
1. From Kerman across a plain to the top of a mountain-pass, where <i>extreme cold was experienced</i> .. .. .	7
2. A descent, occupying .. .. .	2
3. A great plain, called <i>Kowbarles</i> , in a much warmer climate, abounding in francolin partridge, and in dates and tropical fruit, with a ruined city of former note, called <i>Camadi</i> , near the head of the plain, which extends for .. .. .	5
4. A second very bad pass, descending for 20 miles, say .. .. .	1
5. A well-watered fruitful plain, which is crossed to <i>Hormuz</i> , on the shores of the Gulf .. .. .	2
Total .. .. .	17

No European traveller, so far as I know, has in modern times followed the most direct road from Kerman to Hormuz, or rather to its nearest modern representative Bander Abbasi, I mean the road by Baft. But a line to the eastward of this, and leading through the plain of

Jiruft, was followed partially by Mr. Abbott in 1850, and completely by Major R. M. Smith, R.E., in 1866. The details of this route correspond so closely in essentials with those given by our author, that I feel little doubt of its being his very route. In any case it amply illustrates the features of that route.

Major Smith (accompanied at first by Colonel Goldsmid who diverged to Mekran) left Kerman on the 15th of January, and reached Bander Abbasi on the 3rd of February, but, as three halts have to be deducted, his total number of marches was exactly the same as Marco's, viz. 17. They divide as follows:—

Marches.

- |  |    |
|--|----|
| 1. From Kerman to the caravanserai of Deh Bakri in the pass so called. "The ground as I ascended became covered with snow, and the weather bitterly cold" ( <i>Report</i> ) . . . . .  | 6  |
| 2. Two miles <i>over very deep snow</i> brought him to the top of the pass; he then descended 14 miles to his halt. 2 miles to the south of the crest he passed a 2nd caravanserai: "The two are evidently built so near one another to afford shelter to travellers who may be unable to cross the ridge during heavy snow-storms." The next march continued the descent for 14 miles, and then carried him 10 miles along the banks of the Rudkhanah-i-Shor. The approximate height of the pass above the sea is estimated at 8000 feet. We have thus for the descent the greater part of . . . . .  | 2  |
| 3. "Clumps of date-palms growing near the village showed that I had now reached a totally different climate" ( <i>Smith's Report</i> ). And Mr. Abbott says of the same region: "Partly wooded . . . and with thickets of reeds abounding with francolin and <i>Jirufti</i> partridge . . . The lands yield grain, millet, pulse, French- and horse-beans, rice, cotton, henna, Palma Christi, and dates, and in part are of great fertility. . . . Rainy season from January to March, after which a luxuriant crop of grass." Across this plain (districts of Jiruft and Rudhar), the height of which above the sea is something under 2000 feet . . . . . | 6  |
| 4. 6½ hours, "nearly the whole way over a most difficult mountain-pass," called the Pass of Nevergu. . . . .   | 1  |
| 5. Two long marches over a plain, part of which is described as "continuous cultivation for some 16 miles," and the rest as a "most uninteresting plain" . . . . .   | 2  |
| Total as before . . . . .  | 17 |

The only point of importance missing in the abstract of Major Smith's Itinerary as we have given it, is Polo's City of *Camadi*. Major Smith writes to me, however, that this is probably to be sought in "the ruined city, the traces of which I observed in the Plain of Jiruft near Kerimabad. The name of the city is now apparently lost." It is, however, known to the natives as the *City of Dakianus*, as Mr. Abbott, who visited the site, informs us. This is a name analogous only to the Arthur's ovens or Merlin's caves of our own country, for all over Mahomedan Asia there are old sites to which legend attaches the name of *Dakianus* or the Emperor Decius, the persecuting tyrant of the *Seven Sleepers*. "The spot," says Abbott, "is an elevated part of the plain on the right bank of the Hali Rüd, and is thickly strewn with

kiln-baked bricks, and shreds of pottery and glass. . . . After heavy rain the peasantry search amongst the ruins for ornaments of stone, and rings and coins of gold, silver, and copper. The popular tradition concerning the city is that it was destroyed by a flood long before the birth of Mahomed." The name *Camadi* in Polo probably represents *Hamadi* or AHMADI, the latter a very common name in Persia. There is an Ahmadi on the road followed by Mr. Abbott, but it is at least some forty miles too far to the south for our data.\* The locality of the *Shahr-i-Dakianus* appears to me to agree well with that of Edrisi's *City of Jiruft*, of which he speaks as a populous place extending over a space of two miles, and surrounded by irrigated fields and gardens: 100 *mans* of dates here cost but two dirhems. The city was two long days' march from Bamm (*Ed.* I. 421-2). The actual distance from Bamm to the City of Dakianus is by Abbott's Journal about sixty-six miles.

The name of REOBARLES, which Marco applies to the plain intermediate between the two descents, has given rise to many conjectures. Marsden pointed to *Rūdbar*, a name frequently applied in Persia to a district on a river, or intersected by streams—a suggestion all the happier that he was not aware of the fact that there is a district of RUDBAR exactly in the required position. The last syllable still requires explanation. I venture to suggest that it is the Arabic LASS, or as Marco would certainly have written it *Les*, a robber. Reobarles will then be RUDBAR-I-LASS, "Robber's River District." The appropriateness of the name Marco has amply illustrated; but in fact it appears to survive in that of one of the rivers of the plain, which is mentioned by both Abbott and Smith under the title of *Rūdkiāmah-i-Duzdi* or Robber's River, a name also applied to a village and old fort on the banks of the stream.†

Till the direct road from Kerman has been explored, we must remain in doubt whether that would not answer Marco's description as perfectly as this route by Jiruft does; it could scarcely answer *more* perfectly. It will be seen that Marco speaks in strong terms of the cold at the top of the first descent. Such impressions are of course partly dependent on accident; thus Major Smith speaks of it as bitter at Deh Bakri, whilst Mr. Abbott at the same time of year found the climate "comparatively mild." The mountains on the *direct* route are certainly higher and colder, for it was the fact that they were *impassable from snow*, which obliged Goldsmid and Smith to take the other line. We may

\* Mr. Abbott, to whom we owe so much valuable illustration, has discussed Marco Polo's route, and has himself started the identity of *Camadi* with the ruins which he saw, but only to reject the idea. He has in fact made a fatal oversight in his treatment of the route by assuming *Camadi* to be at the foot of the *second* descent. (See *J. R. G. S.* XXV. p. 47 and 56.)

† Col. Goldsmid, to whom I referred this, writes: "I think it very probable indeed . . . there is no doubt that these Arab-Persian combinations constantly occur, and my own impression is that I have often heard, in my travels, the word '*lass*' used for '*robber*.'"

also note the title of "the Cold Mountains" applied by Edrîsî to these very mountains. And Mr. Abbott's MS. Report mentions in this direction, *Sardu*, said to be a cold country (as its name seems to express), which its population (Iliyats) abandon in winter for the lower plains.

Marco's description of the "Plain of Formosa" does not apply, now at least, to the *whole* plain, for towards Bander Abbasi it is barren. But to the eastward, about Minao, and therefore about Old Hormuz, it has not fallen off. Colonel Pelly writes: "The district of Minao is still for those regions singularly fertile. Pomegranates, oranges, pistachio-nuts, and various other fruits grow in profusion. The source of its fertility is of course the river, and you can walk for miles among lanes and cultivated ground, partially sheltered from the sun." And Lieutenant Kempthorne, in his notes on that coast, says of the same tract: "It is termed by the natives the Paradise of Persia. It is certainly most beautifully fertile, and abounds in orange-groves, and orchards containing apples, pears, peaches, and apricots; with vineyards producing a delicious grape, from which was at one time made a wine called *amber-rosolli*"—qu. '*Ambar-i-Rasûl*, "the Prophet's Bouquet!" a bold name even for Persia?

When Nearchus beached his fleet on the shore of *Harmozeia* at the mouth of the *Anamis* (the River of Minao), Arrian tells us he found the country a kindly one, and very fruitful in every way except that there were no olives. The weary mariners landed and enjoyed this pleasant rest from their toils. (*Indica*, 33; *J. R. G. S. V.* 274.)

The name *Formosa* may be a corruption of some lost Persian name, such as *Farâmosh* (forgetfulness), but it is more probably only Rusticiano's misunderstanding of *Harmusa*, aided, perhaps, by Polo's picture of the beauty of the plain. We have the same change in the old *Mafomet* for Mahomet, and the converse one in the Spanish *hermosa* for *formosa*. Teixeira's Chronicle says that the city of Hormuz was founded by Xa Mahamed Dramku, *i.e.* Shah Mahomed Dirhem-Ko, in "a plain of the same name."

The statement in Ramusio that Hormuz stood upon an island, is, I doubt not, an interpolation by himself or some earlier transcriber.

When the ships of Nearchus launched again from the mouth of the *Anamis*, their first day's run carried them past a certain desert and bushy island to another which was large and inhabited. The desert isle was called *Organa*; the large one by which they anchored *Oaracta* (*Indica*, 37). Neither name is quite lost; the latter greater island is Kishm or *Brakht*; the former *Jerûn*, probably in old Persian *Gérûn* or *Gerân*, now again desert though no longer bushy, after having been for three centuries the site of a city which became a poetic type of wealth and splendour. An Eastern saying ran, "Were the world a ring, Hormuz would be the jewel in it."

NOTE 2.—A spirit is still distilled from dates in Persia, Mekran, Sind, and some places in the west of India. It is mentioned by Strabo

MARCO POLO'S ITINERARIES  
N° II.

Kerman to Hormuz: Book 1, Ch 19.  
English Miles







and Dioscorides, according to Kämpfer, who says it was in his time made under the name of a medicinal stomachic; the rich added *Radix Chinæ*, ambergris, and aromatic spices; the poor liquorice and Persian absinth. (*Sir B. Frere; Amoen. Exot.* 750; *Maced. Kinneir*, 220.)

The date and dry-fish diet of the Gulf people is noticed by most travellers. Ibn Batuta says the people of Hormuz had a saying, "*Khormá wa máhi lút-i-Pádsháhi*," i. e. "dates and fish make an Emperor's dish!" A fish, exactly like the tunny of the Mediterranean in general appearance and habits, is one of the great objects of fishery off the Sind and Mekran coasts. It comes in pursuit of shoals of anchovies, very much like the Mediterranean fish also. (*J. B.* II. 231; *Sir B. Frere*.)

NOTE 3.—The stitched vessels of Kerman (*πλοίαρα ραπτά*) are noticed in the 'Periplus.' Similar accounts to those of our text are given of the ships of the Gulf and of Western India by Jordanus and John of Montecorvino (*Jord.* p. 53; *Cuthay*, p. 217). "Stitched vessels," Sir B. Frere writes, "are still used. I have seen them of 200 tons burden; but they are being driven out by iron fastened vessels, as iron gets cheaper, except where (as on the Malabar and Coromandel coasts) the pliancy of a stitched boat is useful in a surf. Till the last few years, when steamers have begun to take all the best horses, the Arab horses bound to Bombay almost all came in the way Marco Polo describes." Some of them do still, standing over a date cargo, and the result of this combination gives rise to an extraordinary traffic in the Bombay bazaar. From what Colonel Pelly tells me, the stitched build in the Gulf is now confined to fishing-boats, and is disused for sea-going craft.

The fish-oil used to rub the ships was whale-oil. The old Arab voyagers of the 9th century describe the fishermen of Siraf in the Gulf as cutting up the whale-blubber and drawing the oil from it, which was mixed with other stuff, and used to rub the joints of ships' planking. (*Reinaud*, I. 146.)

Both Montecorvino, and Polo in this passage, specify *one rudder*, as if it was a peculiarity of these ships worth noting. The fact is that, in the Mediterranean at least, the double rudders of the ancients kept their place to a great extent through the Middle Ages. A Marseilles MS. of the 13th century, quoted in Ducange, says: "A ship requires three rudders, two in place, and one to spare." Another: "Every two-ruddered bark shall pay a groat each voyage; every one-ruddered bark shall," &c. (see Duc. under *Timonus* and *Temo*). Numerous proofs of the use of two rudders in the 13th century will be found in "*Documenti inediti riguardanti le due Crociate di S. Ludovico IX., Re di Francia*, &c., da L. T. Belgrano, Genova, 1859." Thus in a specification of ships to be built at Genoa for the king (p. 7), each is to have "*Timones duo, affaiticos, grossitudinis palmorum viiii et dimidia, longitudinis cubitorum xxiiii.*" Extracts given by Capmany, regarding the equipment of galleys, shew the same thing, for he is probably mistaken in saying that

one of the *dos timones* specified was a spare one. Joinville (p. 205) gives incidental evidence of the same: "Those Marseilles ships have each two rudders, with each a tiller (*tison*) attached to it in such an ingenious way that you can turn the ship right or left as fast as you would turn a horse. So on the Friday the king was sitting upon one of these tillers, when he called me and said to me," &c.\* Francesco da Barberino, a poet of the 13th century, in the 7th part of his *Documenti d'Amore* (printed at Rome in 1640), which instructs the lover to whose lot it may fall to escort his lady on a sea-voyage (instructions carried so far as to provide even for the case of her death at sea!), alludes more than once to these plural rudders. Thus—

— se vedessi avvenire  
Che vento ti rompesse  
*Timoni* . . . . .  
In luogo di timoni  
Fa spere† e in acqua poni" (p. 272-3).

And again, when about to enter a port, it is needful to be on the alert and ready to run in case of a hostile reception, so the galley should enter stern foremost—a movement which he reminds his lover involves the reversal of the ordinary use of the two rudders:—

*L' un timon leva suso  
L' altro legghier tien giuso ;  
Ma convien levar mano  
Non mica com soleàno,  
Ma per contraro, e face  
Così 'l guidar verace* (p. 275).

A representation of a vessel over the door of the Leaning Tower at Pisa shows this arrangement, which is also discernible in the frescoes of galley-fights by Spinello Aretini, in the municipal palace at Siena.

The midship-rudder seems to have been the more usual in the western seas, and the double quarter-rudders in the Mediterranean. The former are sometimes styled *Navarresques* and the latter *Latins*. Yet early seals of some of the Cinque Ports show vessels with the double rudder; one of which (that of Winchelsea) is given in the cut.

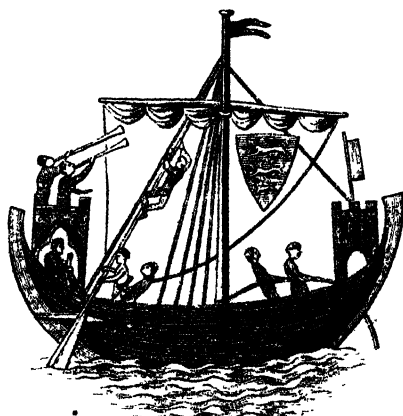
In the Mediterranean the latter was still in occasional use late in the 16th century. Captain Pantero Pantera in his book, *L'Armata Navale* (Rome, 1614, p. 44) says that the Galeasses, or great galleys, had the helm *alla Navarresca*, but also a great oar on each side of it to assist in turning the ship. And I observe that the great galeasses which precede the Christian line of battle at Lepanto, in one of the frescoes by Vasari in the Royal Hall leading to the Sistine Chapel, have the quarter-rudder very distinctly.

\* This *tison* can be seen in the cuts from the tomb of St. Peter Martyr, and the seal of Winchelsea.  
† *Spere*, bundles of spars, &c., dragged overboard.

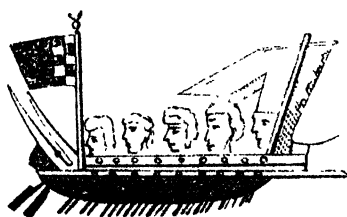
- The Chinese appear occasionally to employ it, as seems to be indicated in a woodcut of a vessel of war which I have traced from a Chinese book in the Imperial Library at Paris (see above, p. 37). It is



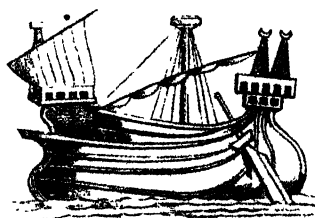
12th Century Illumination. (After Pertz.)



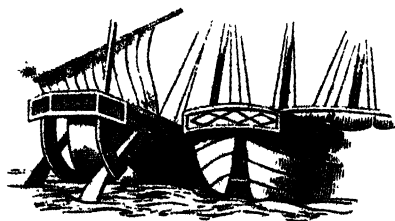
Seal of Winchelsea.



12th Century Illumination (After Pertz.)



From Leaning Tower.



After Spinello Aretini at Siena.



From Monument of St. Peter Martyr.

#### Illustrations of the Double Rudder of the Middle Ages.

also used by certain craft of the Indian Archipelago, as appears from Mr. Wallace's description of the *Prang* in which he sailed from Macassar to the Aru Islands. And on the Caspian, it is stated in Smith's Dict. o

Antiquities (art. *Gubernaculum*), the practice remained in force till late times. A modern traveller was nearly wrecked on that sea, because the two rudders were in the hands of two pilots who spoke different languages, and did not understand each other!

(Besides the works quoted see *Jal*, *Archéologie Navale*, II. 437-8, and *Capmany*, *Memorias*, III. 61).

NOTE 4.—So also at Bander Abbas Tavernier says it was so unhealthy that foreigners could not stop there beyond March; everybody left it in April. Not a hundredth part of the population, says Kämpfer, remained in the city. Not a beggar would stop for any reward! The rich went to the towns of the interior or to the cool recesses of the mountains, the poor took refuge in the palm-groves at the distance of a day or two from the city. A place called 'Ishin, some twelve miles north of the city, was a favourite resort of the European and Hindu merchants. Here were fine gardens, spacious baths, and a rivulet of fresh and limpid water.

The custom of lying in water is mentioned also by Sir John Maundevile, and it was adopted by the Portuguese when they occupied Insular Hormuz, as P. della Valle and Linschoten relate. The custom is still common during great heats, in Sind and Mekran (Sir B. F.).

An anonymous ancient geography (*Liber Junioris Philosophi*) speaks of a people in India who live in the Terrestrial Paradise, and lead the life of the Golden Age. . . . The sun is so hot that they remain all day in the river!

The heat in the Straits of Hormuz drove Abdurrazzak into an anticipation of a verse familiar to English schoolboys: "Even the bird of rapid flight was burnt up in the heights of heaven, as well as the fish in the depths of the sea!" (*Tavern.* Bk. V. ch. xxiii.; *Am. Exot.* 716, 762; *Müller, Geog. Gr. Min.* II. 514; *India in XV. cent.* p. 49.)

NOTE 5.—A like description of the effect of the *Simûm* on the human body is given by Ibn Batuta, Chardin, A. Hamilton, Tavernier, Thévenot, &c., but I have met with no reasonable account of its poisonous action. I will quote Chardin, already quoted at greater length by Marsden, as the most complete parallel to the text: "The most surprising effect of the wind is not the mere fact of its causing death, but its operation on the bodies of those who are killed by it. It seems as if they became decomposed without losing shape, so that you would think them to be merely asleep, when they are not merely dead, but in such a state that if you take hold of any part of the body it comes away in your hand. And the finger penetrates such a body as if it were so much dust" (III. 286).

Burton, on his journey to Medina, says: "The people assured me that this wind never killed a man in their Allah-favoured land. I doubt the fact. At Bir Abbas the body of an Arnaut was brought in swollen, and decomposed rapidly, the true diagnosis of death by the poison-

wind." Khanikoff is very distinct as to the immediate fatality of the desert wind at Khabis, near Kerman, but does not speak of the effect on the body after death. (*J. R. G. S.* XXVI. 217; *Khan. Mém.* 210.)

NOTE 6.—The History of Hormuz is very imperfectly known. What I have met with on the subject consists of (1) An abstract by Teixeira of a chronicle of Hormuz written by Thurán Sháh, who was himself sovereign of Hormuz, and died in 1377; (2) some contemporary notices by Wassáf, which are extracted by Hammer in his History of the Ilkhans; (3) some notices from Persian sources in the 2nd Decade of De Barros (ch. ii.).

One of Teixeira's Princes is called *Ruknuddin Mahmud*, and with him Marsden and Pauthier have identified Polo's Ruomedam Acomet, or as he is called on another occasion in the Geog. Text, *Maimodi Acomet*. This, however, is out of the question, for the death of Ruknuddin is assigned to A.H. 676 (A.D. 1277). whilst there can, I think, be no doubt that Marco's account refers to the period of his return from China, viz., 1293 or thereabouts.

We find in Teixeira that the ruler who succeeded in 1290 was *Amir Musa'úd*, who obtained the Government by the murder of his brother Saifuddin Nazrat. Musa'úd was cruel and oppressive; most of the influential people withdrew to Baháuddin Ayaz, whom Saifuddin had made Wazir of Kalhát on the Arabian coast. This Wazir assembled a force and drove out Musa'úd after he had reigned three years. He fled to Kerman and died there some years afterwards.

Baháuddin, who had originally been a slave of Saifuddin Nazrat's, succeeded in establishing his authority. But about 1300 great bodies of Turks (*i.e.* Tartars) issuing from Turkestan ravaged many provinces of Persia, including Kermán and Hormuz. The people, unable to bear the frequency of such visitations, retired first to the island of Kishm, and then to that of Jerun, on which last was built the city of New Hormuz, afterwards so famous. This is Teixeira's account from Thurán Shah, so far as we are concerned with it. As regards the transfer of the city it agrees substantially with Abulfeda's, which we have already quoted (*supra*, note 1).

Hammer's account from Wassáf is frightfully confused, chiefly I should suppose from Hammer's own fault; for among other things he assumes that Hormuz was always on an island, and he distinguishes between the Island of Hormuz and the Island of Jerun! We gather, however, that Hormuz before the Mongol time formed a government subordinate to the Salghur Atabegs of Fars (see note 1, chap. xv.), and when the power of that dynasty was falling, the governor Mahmúd Kalhátí, established himself as Prince of Hormuz, and became the founder of a petty dynasty, being evidently identical with Teixeira's Ruknuddin Mahmud above-named, who is represented as reigning from 1246 to 1277. In Wassáf we find, as in Teixeira, Mahmud's son Masa'ud killing his brother Nazrat, and Baháuddin expelling Mahmud. It is true

that Hammer's incomparable muddle makes Nazrat kill Masa'ud ; however as a few lines lower we find Masa'ud alive and Nazrat dead, we may safely venture on this correction. But we find also that Masa'ud appears as *Ruknuddin* Masa'ud, and that Baháuddin does not assume the princely authority himself, but proclaims that of *Fakhruddin Ahmed* Ben Ibrahim At-Thaibi, a personage who does not appear in Teixeira at all. A MS. history, quoted by Ouseley, *does* mention Fakhruddin, and ascribes to him the transfer to Jerun. Wassáf seems to allude to Baháuddin as a sort of Sea Rover, occupying the islands of Iarek and Jerun, whilst Fakhruddin reigned at Hormuz. It is difficult to understand the relation between the two.

It is *possible* that Polo's memory made some confusion between the names of RUKNUDDIN Masa'ud and Fakhruddin AHMED, but I incline to think the latter is his RUOMEDAN AHMED. For Teixeira tells us that Masa'ud took refuge at the court of Kerman, and Wassáf represents him as supported in his claims by the Atabeg of that province, whilst we see that Polo seems to represent Ruomedan Acomat as in hostility with that prince. To add to the imbroglio I find in the 3rd vol. of Elliot (yet unpublished) Malik Fakhruddin Ahmed at-Thaibi, sent by Ghazan Khan in 1297 as ambassador to Khanbalig, staying there some years, and dying off the coast of Ma'bar on his return in 1305 (see pp. 45-47).

Masa'ud's seeking help from Kerman to reinstate him is not the first case of the same kind that occurs in Teixeira's chronicle, so there may have been some kind of colour for Marco's representation of the Prince of Hormuz as the vassal of the Atabeg of Kerman. M. Khanikoff indeed denies that Marco's expression "*L'homme de cest roy de Creman*" does mean a vassal, or liegeman, but it is the constant meaning of that expression in our author's time and in his pages (see *Prologue*, chap. xiv. note 2). M. Khanikoff also denies the *possibility* of the existence of any *royal dynasty* at Hormuz at this period. That there *was* a dynasty of *Maliks* of Hormuz however at this period we must be content to believe on the concurring testimony of Marco, of Wassáf, and of Thuran Shah. (*Hammer's Ilch.* II. 50, 51 ; *Teixeira, Relacion de los Reyes de Hormuz ; Khan. Notice*, p. 34.)

The ravages of the Tartars which drove the people of Hormuz from their city *may* have begun with the incursions of the Nigudaris and Caraunahs, but they probably came to a climax in the great raid in 1299 of the Chaghataian Prince Kotlogh Shah, son of Dua Khan, a part of whose bands besieged the city itself, though they are said to have been repulsed by Baháuddin Ayas.

NOTE 7.—The indications of this alternative route to Kerman are *very* vague, but I think it *may* probably be that through Finn, Tarum, and the Sirjan district, passing out of the plain of Hormuz by the *eastern* flank of the Ginao mountain. This road would pass near the hot springs at the base of the said mountain, Sarga, Khurkhu, and Ginao, which are *described* by Kämpfer. Being more or less sulphureous

they are likely to be useful in skin-diseases ; indeed, Hamilton speaks of their efficacy in these (I. 95). The salt-streams are numerous on this line, and dates are abundant. The bitterness of the bread was however in all probability due to another cause, as Major Smith has kindly pointed out to me : " Throughout the mountains in the south of Persia, which are generally covered with dwarf oak, the people are in the habit of making bread of the acorns, or of the acorns mixed with wheat or barley. It is dark in colour, and very hard, bitter, and unpalatable."

## CHAPTER XX

OF THE WEARISOME AND DESERT ROAD THAT HAS NOW TO BE  
TRAVELLED

ON departing from the city of Kerman you find the road for seven days most wearisome : and I will tell you how this is. The first three days you meet with no water, or next to none. And what little you do meet with is bitter green stuff, so salt that no one can drink it ; and in fact if you drink a drop of it, it will set you purging ten times at least by the way. It is the same with the salt which is made from those streams : no one dares to make use of it, because of the excessive purging which it occasions. Hence it is necessary to carry water for the people to last these three days ; as for the cattle, they must needs drink of the bad water I have mentioned, as there is no help for it, and their great thirst makes them do so. But it scours them to such a degree that sometimes they die of it. In all those three days you meet with no human habitation ; it is all desert, and the extremity of drought. Even of wild beasts there are none, for there is nothing for them to eat.<sup>1</sup>

After those three days of desert [you arrive at a stream of fresh water running underground, but along which there are holes broken in here and there, perhaps undermined by the stream, at which you can get sight of it. It has an abundant supply, and travellers worn with the hardships of the desert here rest and refresh themselves and their beasts.]<sup>2</sup>



You then enter another desert which extends for four days; it is very much like the former except that you do see some wild asses. And at the termination of these four days of desert you find another city which is called Cobinan.

NOTE 1.—This description of the Desert of Kerman, says M. Khanikoff, "is very correct. As the only place in the Desert of Lút where water is found is the dirty, salt, bitter, and green water of the rivulet called *Shor-Rúd* (the Salt River) we can have no doubt of the direction of Marco Polo's route from Kerman so far." Nevertheless I do not agree with Khanikoff that the route lay N.E. in the direction of Ambar and Kain, for a reason which will appear under the next chapter. I imagine the route to have been nearly due north from Kerman, in the direction of Tabbas or of Tún. And even such a route would, according to Khanikoff's own map, pass the *Shor-Rúd*, though at a higher point.

I extract a few lines from Khanikoff's own narrative: "In proportion as we got deeper into the desert, the soil became more and more arid; at daybreak I could still discover a few withered plants of *Caligonum* and *Salsola*, and not far from the same spot I saw a lark and another bird of a whitish colour, the last living things that we beheld in this, dismal solitude. . . . The desert had now completely assumed the character of a land accursed, as the natives call it. Not the smallest blade of grass, no indication of animal life vivified the prospect; no sound but such as came from our own caravan broke the dreary silence of the void." (*Mém.* p. 176.)

NOTE 2.—I can have no doubt of the genuineness of this passage from Ramusio. Indeed some such passage is necessary; otherwise why distinguish between three days of desert and four days more of desert? The underground stream was probably a subterranean canal (called *Kunát* or *Kárez*), such as is common in Persia; often conducted from a great distance. Here it may have been a relic of abandoned cultivation. Khanikoff, on the road between Kerman and Yezd, not far west of that which I suppose Marco to be travelling, says: "At the fifteen inhabited spots marked upon the map, they have water which has been brought from a great distance, and at considerable cost, by means of subterranean galleries to which you descend by large and deep wells. Although the water flows at some depth, its course is tracked upon the surface by a line of more abundant vegetation" (Ib. p. 200). Elphinstone says he has heard of such subterranean conduits thirty-six miles in length (I. 398).

## CHAPTER XXI.

CONCERNING THE CITY OF COBINAN AND THE THINGS THAT ARE  
MADE THERE.

COBINAN is a large town.<sup>1</sup> The people worship Mahommet. There is much Iron and Steel and *Ondanique*, and they make steel mirrors of great size and beauty. They also prepare both *Tutia* (a thing very good for the eyes) and *Spodium*; and I will tell you the process.

They have a vein of a certain earth which has the required quality, and this they put into a great flaming furnace, whilst over the furnace there is an iron grating. The smoke and moisture expelled from the earth of which I speak, adhere to the iron grating, and thus form *Tutia*, whilst the slag that is left after burning is the *Spodium*.<sup>2</sup>

\* NOTE 1.—KOH-BANÂN is mentioned by Mokaddasi (A.D. 985) as one of the cities of Bardesir, the most northerly of the five circles into which he divides Kerman (see *Sprenger, Post- und Reise-Route des Orients*, p. 77). It is the subject of an article in the Geog. Dictionary of Yâkût, though it has been there mistranscribed into *Kubiyân* and *Kukiyân* (see Leipzig ed. 1869, iv. p. 316, and *Barbier de Meynard, Dict. de la Perse*, p. 498). And it is also indicated by Mr. Abbott (*J. R. G. S.* XXV. 25) as the name of a district of Kerman, lying some distance to the east of his route when somewhat less than halfway between Yezd and Kerman. It would thus, I apprehend, be on or near the route between Kerman and Tabbas; one which I believe has been traced by no modern traveller. We may be certain that there is now no place at Kuh-Banan deserving the title of *une cité grant*, nor is it easy to believe that there was in Polo's time; he applies such terms too profusely. The meaning of the name is perhaps 'Hill of the Terebinths, or Wild Pistachioes,' "a tree which grows abundantly in the recesses of bleak, stony and desert mountains, e.g. about Shamâkhi, about Shiraz, and in the deserts of Luristan and Lar." (*Kämpfer*, 409, 413.)

I had thought my identification of *Cobinan* original, but a communication from Mr. Abbott, and the opportunity which this procured me of seeing his MS. Report already referred to, showed that he had anticipated me many years ago. The following is an extract: "*Districts of Kerman* \* \* \* *Kooh Benan*. This is a hilly district abounding in fruits, such as grapes, peaches, pomegranates, *sinjid* (sawet-willow), wal

nuts, melons. A great deal of madder and some assafoetida is produced there. *This is no doubt the country alluded to by Marco Polo, under the name of Cobinam*, as producing iron, brass, and tutty, and which is still said to produce iron, copper, and tootea." There appear to be lead-mines also in the district, as well as asbestos and sulphur. Mr. Abbott adds the names of nine villages, which he was not able to verify by comparison. These are Pooz, Terz, Goojerd, Aspuij, Koooh-e-Guevre, Dehneh, Boogheen, Bassab, Radk. The position of Kuh Banán is stated to lie between Bahabád (a place also mentioned by Yakut as producing *Tutia*) and Rávee, but this does not help us, and for approximate position we can only fall back on the note in Mr. Abbott's field-book as published in the *J. R. G. S.*, viz. that the *District* lay in the mountains E.S.E. from a caravanserai ten miles S.E. of Gudran. To get the seven marches of Polo's itinerary we must carry the *Town* of Kuh Banán as far north as this indication can possibly admit, for Abbott made only five and a half marches from the spot where this observation was made to Kerman. Perhaps Polo's route deviated for the sake of the fresh water. That a district, such as Mr. Abbott's Report speaks of, should lie unnoticed, in a tract which our maps represent as part of the Great Desert, shows how very defective our geography of Persia still is.

NOTE 2.—*Tutty* (*i.e.* *Tútia*) is in modern English an impure oxide of zinc, collected from the flues where brass is made; and this appears to be precisely what Polo describes, unless it be that in his account the production of tutia from an ore of zinc is represented as the object and not an accident of the process. What he says reads almost like a condensed translation of Galen's account of *Pompholyx* and *Spodos*: "*Pompholyx* is produced in copper-smelting as *Cadmia* is; and it is also produced from *Cadmia* (carbonate of zinc) when put in the furnace, as is done (for instance) in Cyprus. The master of the works there, having no copper ready for smelting, ordered some pompholyx to be prepared from cadmia in my presence. Small pieces of cadmia were thrown into the fire in front of the copper-blast. The furnace-top was covered, with no vent at the crown, and intercepted the soot of the roasted cadmia. This, when collected, constitutes *Pompholyx*, whilst that which falls on the hearth is called *Spodos*, a great deal of which is got in copper-smelting." Pompholyx, he adds, is an ingredient in salves for eye-discharges and pustules (*Galen, De Simpl. Medic.* p. ix. in Latin ed., Venice, 1576). Matthioli, after quoting this, says that Pompholyx was commonly known in the laboratories by the Arabic name of *Tútia*. I see that pure oxide of zinc is stated to form in modern practice a valuable eye-ointment. Zinc is called in the *Áin Akbari Rúh-i-Tútíya* "Spirit of Tutty."

Teixeira speaks of tutia as found only in Kerman, in a range of mountains twelve parasangs from the capital. The ore got here was kneaded with water, and set to bake in crucibles in a potter's kiln. When well baked the crucibles were lifted and emptied, and the *tutia*

carried in boxes to Hormuz for sale. This corresponds with a modern account in Milburne, which says that the tutia imported to India from the Gulf is made from an argillaceous ore of zinc which is moulded into tubular cakes, and baked to a moderate hardness. The accurate Garcias da Horta is wrong for once, in saying that the tutia of Kerman is no mineral, but the ash of a certain tree called *Goan*.

(*Motth. on Dioscorides*, Ven. 1565, p. 1338-40; *Téixeria, Relation de Persia*, p. 121; *Milburne's Or. Commerce*, l. 139; *Garcias*, f. 21 v.; *Eng. Cyc.*, art. *Zinc*; *Ain Akbari*, Bl. 40, 41).

## CHAPTER XXII.

OF A CERTAIN DESERT THAT CONTINUES FOR EIGHT DAYS' JOURNEY.

WHEN you depart from this City of Cobinan, you find yourself again in a Desert of surpassing aridity which lasts for some eight days; here are neither fruits nor trees to be seen, and what water there is is bitter and bad, so that you have to carry both food and water. The cattle must needs drink the bad water, will they nill they, because of their great thirst. At the end of those eight days you arrive at a Province which is called *TONOCAIN*. It has a good many towns and villages, and forms the extremity of Persia towards the North.<sup>1</sup> It also contains an immense plain on which is found the *ARBRE SOL*, which we Christians call the *Arbre Sec*; and I will tell you what it is like. It is a tall and thick tree, having the bark on one side green and the other white; and it produces a rough husk like that of a chesnut, but without anything in it. The wood is yellow like box, and very strong, and there are no other trees near it nor within a hundred miles of it, except on one side where you find trees within about ten miles' distance. And there, the people of the country tell you, was fought the battle between Alexander and King Darius.<sup>2</sup>

The towns and villages have great abundance of everything good, for the climate is extremely temperate, being

neither very hot nor very cold. The natives all worship Mahommet, and are a very fine-looking people, especially the women, who are surpassingly beautiful.

NOTE 1.—All that region has been described as “a country divided into deserts that are salt, and deserts that are not salt” (*Vigne*, I. 16). *Tonocain*, as we have seen (chap. xv. note 1), is the Eastern Kuhistan of Persia, but extended by Polo, it would seem, to include the whole of Khorasan. No city in particular is indicated as visited by the traveller, but the view I take of the position of the *Arbre Sec*, as well as his route through Koh-Banan, would lead me to suppose that he reached the Province of TUN-O-KAIN about Talhbas.

NOTE 2.—This is another subject on which a long and somewhat discursive note is inevitable.

One of the Bulletins of the Soc. de Géographie (ser. 3. tom. iii. p. 187) contains a perfectly inconclusive endeavour by M. Roux de Rochelle, to identify the *Arbre Sec* or *Arbre Sol* with a manna bearing oak alluded to by Q. Curtius as growing in Hyrcania. There can be no doubt that the tree described is, as Marsden points out, a *Chindr* or Oriental Plane. Mr. Ernst Meyer, in his learned *Geschichte der Botanik* (Königsberg, 1854-57, IV. 123), objects that Polo's description of the wood does not answer to that tree. But, with due allowance, compare with his whole account that which Olearius gives of the Chinar, and say if the same tree be not meant. “The trees are as tall as the pine, and have very large leaves, closely resembling those of the vine. The fruit looks like a chesnut, but has no kernel, so it is not eatable. The wood is of a very brown colour, and full of veins; the Persians employ it for doors and window-shutters, and when these are rubbed with oil they are incomparably handsomer than our walnut-wood joinery” (I. 526). The Chinar-wood is used in Kashmir for gunstocks.

The whole tenor of the passage seems to imply that some eminent individual Chinar is meant. The appellations given to it vary in the different texts. In the G. Text it is styled in this passage “The *Arbre Seule* which the Christians call the *Arbre Sec*,” whilst in ch. cci. of the same (*infra* Book IV. chap. v.) it is called “*L'Arbre Sol*, which in the Book of Alexander is called *L'Arbre Seche*.” Pauthier has here “*L'Arbre Solque*, que nous appelons *L'Arbre Sec*,” and in the later passage “*L'Arbre Seul*, que le Livre Alexandre apelle *Arbre Sec*,” whilst Ramusio has here “*L'Albero del Sole* che si chiama per i Cristiani *L'Albor Secco*,” and does not contain the later passage. So also I think all the old Latin and French printed texts, which are more or less based on Pipino's version, have “The *Tree of the Sun*, which the Latins call the *Dry Tree*.”

Pauthier, building as usual on the reading of his own text (*Solque*),

endeavours to show that this odd word represents *Thoulk*, the Arabic name of a tree to which Forskal gave the title of *Ficus Vasta*, and this *Ficus Vasta* he will have to be the same as the Chinár. *Ficus Vasta* would be a strange name surely to give to a Plane-tree, but Forskal may be acquitted of such an eccentricity. The *Thoulk* (for that seems to be the proper vocalization) is a tree of Arabia Felix, very different from the Chinár, for it is the well-known Indian Banyan, or a closely-allied species, as may be seen in Forskal's description. The latter indeed says that the Arab botanists called it *Delb*, and that (or *Dulb*) is really a synonyme for the Chinár. But De Sacy has already commented upon this supposed application of the name *Delb* to the *Thoulk* as almost certainly an error (see *Flora Aegyptiaco-Arabica*, p. cxxiv and 179; *Abdallatif, Rel. de l'Égypte*, p. 80; *J. R. G. S.* VIII. 275; *Ritter*, VI. 662, 679).

The fact is that the *Solque* of Pauthier's text is a mere copyist's error in the reduplication of the pronoun *que*. In his chief MS. which he cites as A (No. 10,260 of Bibl. Impériale, now Fr. 5631) we can even see how this might easily happen, for one line ends with *Solque* and the next begins with *que*. The true reading is I doubt not that which this MS. points to, and which the G. Text gives us in the second passage quoted above, viz., *Arbre Sol*, occurring in Ramusio as *Albero del SOLE*. To make this easier of acceptance I must premise two remarks: first, that *Sol* is "the Sun" in both Venetian and Provençal; and, secondly, that in the French of that age the prepositional sign is not necessary to the genitive. Thus, in Pauthier's own text we find in one of the passages quoted above, "*Le Livre Alexandre*;" elsewhere, "*Cazan le fils Argon*," "*à la mère sa femme*," "*Le corps Monsieur Saint Thomas si est en ceste Province*;" in Joinville, "*le commandant Mahomet*," "*ceux de la Haulequa estoient logiez entour les héberges le soudanc, et establiz pour le cors le soudanc garder*;" in Baudouin de Sebourg, "*De l'amour Bauduin esprise et enflambée*."

Moreover it is the TREE OF THE SUN that is prominent in the legendary History of Alexander, a fact sufficient in itself to rule the reading. A character in an old English play says:—

"*Peregrine. Drake was a didapper to Mandevill :  
Candish and Hawkins, Frobisher, all our Voyagers  
Went short of Mandevill. But had he reached  
To this place—here—yes, here—this wilderness,  
And seen the Trees of the Sun and Moon, that speak  
And told King Alexander of his death ;  
He then  
Had left a passage ope to Travellers  
That now is kept and guarded by Wild Beasts.*"

—*Broome's Antipodes*, in *Lambe's Specimens*.

The same trees are alluded to in an ancient Low German Poem in honour of St. Anno of Cologne. Speaking of the Four Beasts of Daniel's Vision:—

“Daz dritte Dier was ein Lebarte  
 Vier arin\* Vederich her havite;  
 Der beceichnote den Criechiskin Alexanderin,  
 Der mit vier Herin vür astir Landin,  
 Unz her die Werilt einde,  
 Bi guldinin Siulin bikante.  
 In India her die Wusti durchbrach,  
 Mit zwein Boumin her sich da gesprach,” &c.

—In *Schilleri Thesaurus Antiq. Teuton.* tom. i.

These oracular Trees of the Sun and Moon, somewhere on the confines of India, appear in all the fabulous histories of Alexander from the Pseudo-Callisthenes downwards. Thus Alexander is made to tell the story: “Then came some of the townspeople and said, ‘We have to show thee something passing strange, O King, and worth thy visiting; for we can show thee trees that talk with human speech.’ So they led me to a certain park, in the midst of which were the Sun and Moon, and round about them a guard of priests of the Sun and Moon. And there stood the two trees of which they had spoken, like unto cypress trees; and round about them were trees like the myrobolans of Egypt, and with similar fruit. And I addressed the two trees that were in the midst of the park, the one which was male in the Masculine gender, and the one that was female in the Feminine gender. And the name of the Male Tree was the Sun, and of the Female Tree the Moon, names which were in that language *Muthu* and *Emaisae*. And the stems were clothed with the skins of animals; the male tree with the skins of he-beasts, and the female tree with the skins of she-beasts. . . And at the setting of the Sun, a voice, speaking in the Indian tongue, came forth from the (Sun) Tree; and I ordered the Indians who were with me to interpret it. But they were afraid and would not,” &c. (*Pseudo-Callisth.* ed. Müller, III. 17.)

The story as related by Firdusi keeps very near to the Greek as just quoted, but does not use the term Tree of the Sun. The chapter of the Sháh Námeḥ containing it is entitled *Didan Sikandar dirakht-i-goyárd*, “Alexander’s interview with the Speaking Tree.” (*Livre des Rois*, V. 229.)

In the *Chanson d’Alexandre* of Lambert le Court and Alex. Bernay, these trees are introduced as follows:—

“‘Signor,’ fait Alixandre, ‘je vus voel demander,  
 Se des merveilles d’Inde me saves rien conter.’  
 Cil li ont respondu: ‘Se tu vius escouter  
 Ja te dirons merveilles, s’es poras esprover.  
 La sus en ces desers pues ii Arbres trover  
 Qui c pies ont de haut, et de grossor sunt per.  
 Li Solaus et La Lune les ont fait si serer  
 Que seivent tous langages et entendre et parler.’”

—Ed. 1861, Dinan, p. 357.

Maundevile informs us precisely where these trees are: "a 15 journeys in lengthe, goynge be the Deserts of the tother side of the Ryvere Beumare," if one could only tell where that is! A medieval chronicler also tells us that Ogerus the Dane (*temp. Caroli Magni*) conquered all the parts beyond sea from Hierusalem to the Trees of the Sun. In the old Italian romance also of *Guerino detto il Meschino*, still a chap-book in S. Italy, the Hero (chap. lxiii.) visits the Trees of the Sun and Moon. But this is mere imitation of the Alexandrian story, and has nothing of interest. (*Maundevile*, p. 297-8; *Fasciculus Temporum* in *Germ. Script. Pistorii Nidani*, II.)

It will be observed that the letter ascribed to Alexander describes the two oracular trees as resembling two cypress-trees. As such the Trees of the Sun and Moon are represented on several extant ancient medals, e.g. on two struck at Perga in Pamphylia in the time of Aurelian. And Eastern story tells us of two vast cypress-trees, sacred among the Magians, which grew in Khotasan, one at Kashmar near Turshiz, and the other at Farnad near Tuz, and which were said to have risen from shoots that Zoroaster brought from Paradise. The former of these was sacrilegiously cut down by the order of the Khalif Motawakkil, in the 9th century. The trunk was dispatched to Baghdad on rollers at a vast expense, whilst the branches alone formed a load for 1300 camels. The night that the convoy reached within one stage of the palace the Khalif was cut in pieces by his own guards. This tree was said to be 1450 years old, and to measure  $33\frac{1}{2}$  cubits in girth. The locality of *this* "Arbor Sol" we see was in Khorasan, and possibly its fame may have been transferred to a representative of another species. The plane as well as the cypress was one of the distinctive trees of the Magian Paradise.

In the Peutingerian Tables we find in the N.E. of Asia the rubric "*Hic Alexander Responsum accepit*," which looks very like an allusion to the tale of the Oracular Trees. If so it is remarkable as a suggestion of the antiquity of the Alexandrian Legends, though the rubric may of course be an interpolation. The Trees of the Sun and Moon appear as located in India Ultima to the East of Persia, in a map which is found in MSS. (12th century) of the *Floridus* of *Lambertus*; and they are indicated more or less precisely in several maps of the succeeding centuries. (*Ouseley's Travels*, I. 387; *Dabistan*, I. 307-8; *Santarem, H. de la Cosmog.* II. 189, III. 506-513, &c.)

Marco has mixt up this legend of the Alexandrian Romance, on the authority, as we shall see reason to believe, of some of the recompliers of that Romance, with a famous subject of *Christian Legend* in that age, the ARBRE SEC or Dry Tree, one form of which is related by Maundevile and by Johan Schiltberger. "A lytille fro Ebron," says the former, "is the Mount of Mambre, of the whyche the Valeye taketh his Name. And there is a Tree of Oke that the Saracens clepen *Dirpe*, that is of Abraham's Tyme, the which men clepen THE DRYE TREE" [Schilt-



berger adds that the heathen call it *Kurru Thereck*, i.e. (Turkish) *Kürü Dirakht* = Dry Tree]. "And they seye that it hathe ben there sithe the beginnyng of the World; and was sumtyme grene and bare Leves, unto the Tyme that Oure Lord dyede on the Cros; and thanne it dryede; and so dyden alle the Trees that weren thanne in the World. And summe seyn be hire Prophecyes that a Lord, a Prynce of the West syde of the World, shalle wynnen the Lond of Promyscioun, i.e. the Holy Lond, withe Helpe of Cristene Men, and he schalle do synge a Masse under that Drye Tree, and than the Tree shall wexen grene and bere both Fruyt and Leves. And thorghe that Myracle manye Sarazines and Jewes schulle ben turned to Cristene Feithe. And, therefore, they dou gret Worschipe thereto, and kepen it fulle besyly. And alle be it so that it be drye, natheless yit he berethe great vertue," &c.

The tradition seems to have altered with circumstances, for a traveller of nearly two centuries later (Friar Anselmo, 1509) describes the oak of Abraham at Hebron as a tree of dense and verdant foliage: "The Saracens make their devotions at it, and hold it in great veneration, for it has remained thus green from the days of Abraham until now; and they tie scraps of cloth on its branches inscribed with some of their writing, and believe that if any one were to cut a piece off that tree he would die within the year." Indeed even before Maundevile's time Friar Burchard (1283) had noticed that though the famous old tree was dry, another had sprung from its roots. And it still has a representative.

As long ago as the time of Constantine a fair was held under the Terebinth of Mamre, which was the object of many superstitious rites and excesses. The Emperor ordered these to be put a stop to, and a church to be erected at the spot. In the time of Arculph (end of 7th century) the dry trunk still existed under the roof of this church.

It is evident that the story of the Dry Tree had got a great vogue in the 13th century. In the *Jus du Pelerin*, a French drama of Polo's age, the Pilgrim says:—

"J'ai puis en maint bon lieu et à maint saint esté,  
J'ai esté au *Sec Arbre* et dusqu'au Daresté."

And in another play of slightly earlier date (*Le Jus de St. Nicolas*), the King of Africa, invaded by the Christians, summons all his allies and feudatories, among whom appear the Admirals of Coine (*Iconium*) and Orkenie (*Hyrkania*), and the *Amiral d'outre le Sec Arbre* (as it were of "the Back of Beyond") in whose country the only current coin is mill-stones! Friar Odoric tells us that he heard at Tabriz that the *Arbor Secco* existed in a mosque of that city; and Clavijo relates a confused story about it in the same locality. Of the *Dürre Baum* at Tauris there is also a somewhat pointless legend in a Cologne MS. of the 14th century, professing to give an account of the East. There are also some curious verses concerning a mystical *Dürre Bom* quoted by Fabri-

cus from an old Low German Poem; and we may just allude to that other mystic *Arbor Secco* of Dante—

— “una pianta dispogliata  
Di fiori e d'altra fronda in ciascun ramo,”

though the dark symbolism in the latter case seems to have a different bearing.

(*Maundevile*, p. 68; *Schiltberger*, p. 113; Anselm. in *Canisii The-saurus*, IV. 781; *Pereg. Quat.* p. 81; *Niceph. Callist.* VIII. 30; *Théâtre Français au Moyen Age*, p. 97, 173; *Cathay*, p. 48; *Clavijo*, p. 90; *Orient und Occident*, Göttingen, 1867, vol. i.; *Fabricii, Vet. Test. Pseud.*, &c., I. 1133; *Dante, Purgat.* xxvii. 35.)

But why does Polo bring this *Arbre Sec* into connexion with the Sun Tree of the Alexandrian Legend? I cannot answer this to my own entire satisfaction, but I can show that such a connexion had been imagined in his time.

M. Paulin-Paris, in a notice of MS. No. 6985 (*Fonds Ancien*) of the Imperial Library, containing a version of the *Chansons de Geste d'Alexandre*, based upon the work of L. Le Court and Alex. Bernay, but with additions of later date, notices amongst these latter the visit of Alexander to the Valley Perilous, where he sees a variety of wonders, among others the *Arbre des Puellès*. Another tree at a great distance from the last is called the ARBRE SEC, and reveals to Alexander the secret of the fate which attends him in Babylon (*Les MSS. Français de la Bibl. du Roi*, III. 105).<sup>\*</sup> Again the English version of *King Alisaundre*, published in Weber's Collection, shows clearly enough that in its French original the term *Arbre Sec* was applied to the Oracular Trees, though the word has been miswritten, and misunderstood by Weber. The King, as in the Greek and French passages already quoted, meeting two old churls, asks if they know of any marvel in those parts :—

“ ‘Ye, par ma fay,’ quoth heo,  
‘ A great merveille we wol telle the;  
‘ That is hennes in even way  
The mountas of ten daies journey,  
Thou shalt finde trowes † two:  
Seyntes and holy they buth bo;  
Higher than in othir countray all.  
ARBESET men heom callith.’

\* \* \* \* \*

‘ Sire Kyng,’ quod on, ‘ by myn eyghe  
Either Trough is an hundred feet hygh,

<sup>\*</sup> It is right to notice that there may be some error in the reference of M. Paulin-Paris; at least I could not trace the *Arbre Sec* in the MS. which he cites, nor in the celebrated Bodleian Alexander, which appears to contain the same version of the story.

<sup>†</sup> Trees.

They stondith up into the skye ;  
That on to the *Sonne*, sikirlye ;  
That othir, we tellith the nowe,  
Is sakret in the *Mone* vertue.'"

—Weber, l. 277.

Weber's glossary gives "*Arbeset* = Strawberry Tree, *arbous*, *arbousier*, *arbutus*;" but that is nonsense.

Further, in the French Prose Romance of Alexander, which is contained in the fine volume in the British Museum known as the Shrewsbury Book (Reg. XV. e. 6), though we do not find the *Arbre Sec* so named, we find it described and pictorially represented. The Romance (fol. xiii. v.) describes Alexander and his chief companions as ascending a certain mountain by 2500 steps which were attached to a golden chain. At the top they find the golden Temple of the Sun and an old man asleep within. It goes on:—

"Quant le viellart les vit si leur demanda s'ils vouloient veoir les Arbres sacrez de la Lune et du Soleil que nous annuncent les choses qui sont à avenir. Quant Alexandre ouy ce si fut rempli de mult grant ioye. Si lui respondirent, 'Ouye sur, nous les voulons veoir.' Et cil lui dist, 'Se tu es nez de prince malle et de femelle il te convient entrer en celui lieu.' Et Alexandre lui respondi, 'Nous somes nez de compagne malle et de femelle.' Dont se leve le viellart du lit ou il gesoit, et leur dist, 'Hostez vos vestemens et vos chaucés.' Et Tholomeus et Antigonus et Perdiacas le suivrent. Lors comencèrent à aler parmy la forest qui estoit enclose en merueilleux labour. Illec trouvèrent les arbres semblables à loriers et oliviers. Et estoient de cent pies de haults, et decouroit d'eulz incens ypobaume\* à grant quantité. Après entrèrent plus avant en la forest, et trouvèrent *une arbre durement hault qui n'avoit ne fueille ne fruit*. Si seoit sur cet arbre une grant oysel qui avoit en son chief une creste qui estoit semblable au paon, et les plumes du col resplendissans come fin or. Et avoit la couleur de rose. Dont lui dist le viellart, 'Cet oysel dont vous vous merveillez est appellés Fenis, lequel n'a nul pareil en tout le monde.' Dont passèrent outre, et allèrent aux Arbres du Soleil et de la Lune. Et quant ils y furent venus, si leur dist le viellart, 'Regardez en haut, et pensez en votre coeur ce que vous vouldrez demander, et ne le dites de la bouche. Alisandre luy demanda en quel langage donnent les Arbres response aux gens. Et il lui respondi, 'L'Arbre du Soleil commence à parler Indien.' Dont baisa Alexandre les arbres, et comença en son cuer à penser s'il conquisteroit tout le monde et retourneroit en Macedonie atout son ost. Dont lui respondi l'Arbre du Soleil, 'Alexandre tu seras Roy de tout le monde, mais Macedonie tu ne verras jamais,' &c.

The appearance of the *Arbre Sec* in Maps of the 15th century, such as those of Andrea Bianco (1436) and Fra Mauro (1459), may

\* Opobalsamum.

be ascribed to the influence of Polo's own work ; but a more genuine evidence of the prevalence of the legend is found in the celebrated Hereford Map constructed in the 13th century by Richard de Haldingham. This, in the vicinity of India and the Terrestrial Paradise, exhibits a Tree with the rubric "*Albor Balsami est Arbor Sicca.*"

The legends of the Dry Tree were probably spun out of the words of the Vulgate in Ezekiel xvii. 24 : "*Humiliavi lignum sublime et exaltavi lignum humile ; et siccavi lignum viride et frondescere feci lignum aridum.*"



**Comment les arbres du soleil et de la lune prophétisent la mort alisandre.**

Whether the *Rue de l'Arbre Sec* in Paris derives its name from the legend I know not.

The actual tree to which Polo refers in the text was probably one of those so frequent in Persia, to which age, position, or accident has attached a character of sanctity, and which are styled *Dirakht-i-Fazl*, Trees of Excellence or Grace, and often receive titles appropriate to Holy Persons. Vows are made before them, and pieces torn from the clothes of the votaries are hung upon the branches or nailed to the trunks. To a Tree of such a character, imposing in decay, Lucan compares Pompey :—

“Stat magni nominis umbra.  
 Qualis frugifero quercus sublimis in agro,  
*Exuvias veteres populi sacrataque gestans*  
*Dona ducum* \* \* \* \* \*  
 — Quamvis primo nutet casura sub Euro,  
 Tot circum silvae firmo se robore tollant,  
 Sola tamen colitur.” — *Pharsalia*, I. 135.

The Tree of Mamre was evidently precisely one of this class; and those who have crossed the Suez Desert before railway days will remember such a *Dirakht-i-Fazl*, an aged mimosa, a veritable *Arbre Seul* (could we accept that reading) that stood just halfway across the Desert, streaming with the *exuviae veteres* of Mecca Pilgrims. The majority of such holy trees in Persia appear to be Plane-trees. Admiration for the beauty of this tree seems to have occasionally risen into superstitious veneration from a very old date. Herodotus tells how Xerxes on his march to Greece decorated a beautiful Chinar with golden ornaments. Pliny rises to enthusiasm in speaking of some noble individuals of the species in Lycia and elsewhere. Chardin describes one grand and sacred specimen, called King Hosain's Chinar, and said to be more than 1000 years old, in a suburb of Ispahan, and another hung with amulets, rags, and tapers in a garden at Shiraz.\* One sacred tree mentioned by the Persian geographer Hamdallah as distinguishing the grave of a holy man at Bostam in Khorasan (the species is not named, at least by Ouseley from whom I borrow this) comes into striking relation with the passage in our text. The story went that it had been the staff of Mahomed; as such it had been transmitted through many generations, until it was finally deposited in the grave of Abū Abdallah Dásitáni, where it struck root and put forth branches. And it is explicitly called *Dirakht-i-Khushk*, i.e. literally *L'ARBRE SEC*.

This last legend belongs to a large class. The staff of Adam, which was created in the twilight of the approaching Sabbath, was bestowed on him in Paradise and handed down successively to Enoch and the line of Patriarchs. After the death of Joseph it was set in Jethro's garden, and there grew untouched till Moses came and got his rod from it. In another form of the legend it is Seth who gets a branch of the Tree of Life, and from this Moses afterwards obtains his rod of power. These Rabbinical stories seem afterwards to have been developed into the Christian legends of the wood destined to form the Cross, such as they are told in the Golden Legend or by Godfrey of Viterbo, and elaborated in Calderon's *Sibila del Oriente*. Indeed, as a valued friend who has consulted the latter for me suggests, probably all the *Arbre Sec* Legends of Christendom bore mystic reference to the Cross. In

\* A recent traveller in China gives a perfectly similar description of sacred trees in Shansi. Many bore inscriptions in large letters, "If you pray, you will certainly be heard." — *Rev. A. Williamson*, in *J. N. C. Br. of R. A. S.* 1866; p. 61.

Calderon's play the Holy Rood, seen in vision, is described as a Tree:—

"cuyas hojas,  
Secas mustias y marchitas,  
Desnudo el tronco dejaban,  
Que, entre mil copas floridas  
De los árboles, el solo  
Sin pompa y sin bizarria  
Era cadáver del prado."

There are several Dry Tree stories among the wonders of Buddhism; one is that of a sacred tree visited by the Chinese pilgrims to India, which had grown from the twig which Sakya in Hindu fashion had used as a tooth-brush; and I think there is a like story in our own country of the Glastonbury Thorn having grown from the staff of Joseph of Arimathea.

(*Santarem*, III. 380, II. 348; *Ouseley*, I. 359 *seqq.* and 391; *Herodotus*, VII. 31; *Pliny*, XII. 5; *Chardin*, VII. 410, VIII. 44 and 426; *Fabricius*, *Vet. Test. Pseud.* I. 80 *seqq.*; *Cathay*, p. 365; *Beal's Fah-Hian*, 72 and 78; *Pélerin's Bouddhistes*, II. 292; *Della Valle*, II. 276-7.)

He who injured the holy tree of Bostam, we are told, perished the same day; a general belief in regard to those *Trees of Grace* of which we have already seen instances in regard to the sacred trees of Zoroaster and the Oak of Hebron. We find the same belief in Eastern Africa, where certain trees, regarded by the natives with superstitious reverence, which they express by driving in votive nails and suspending rags, are known to the European residents by the vulgar name of *Devil Trees*. Burton relates a case of the verification of the superstition in the death of an English merchant who had cut down such a tree, and of four members of his household. It is the old story which Ovid tells, and the tree which Erisichthon felled was a *Dirakht-i-Farl*:

"Vittae median, memoresque tabellae  
Sertaque cingebant voti argumenta potentis."

---*Metamorph.* VIII. 11.

Though the coincidence with our text of Hamdallah's Dry Tree is very striking, I am not prepared to lay stress on it as an argument for the geographical determination of Marco's *Arbre Sec*. His use of the title more than once to characterize the whole frontier of Khorasan can hardly have been a mere whim of his own: and possibly some explanation of that circumstance will yet be elicited from the Persian historians or geographers of the Mongol era.

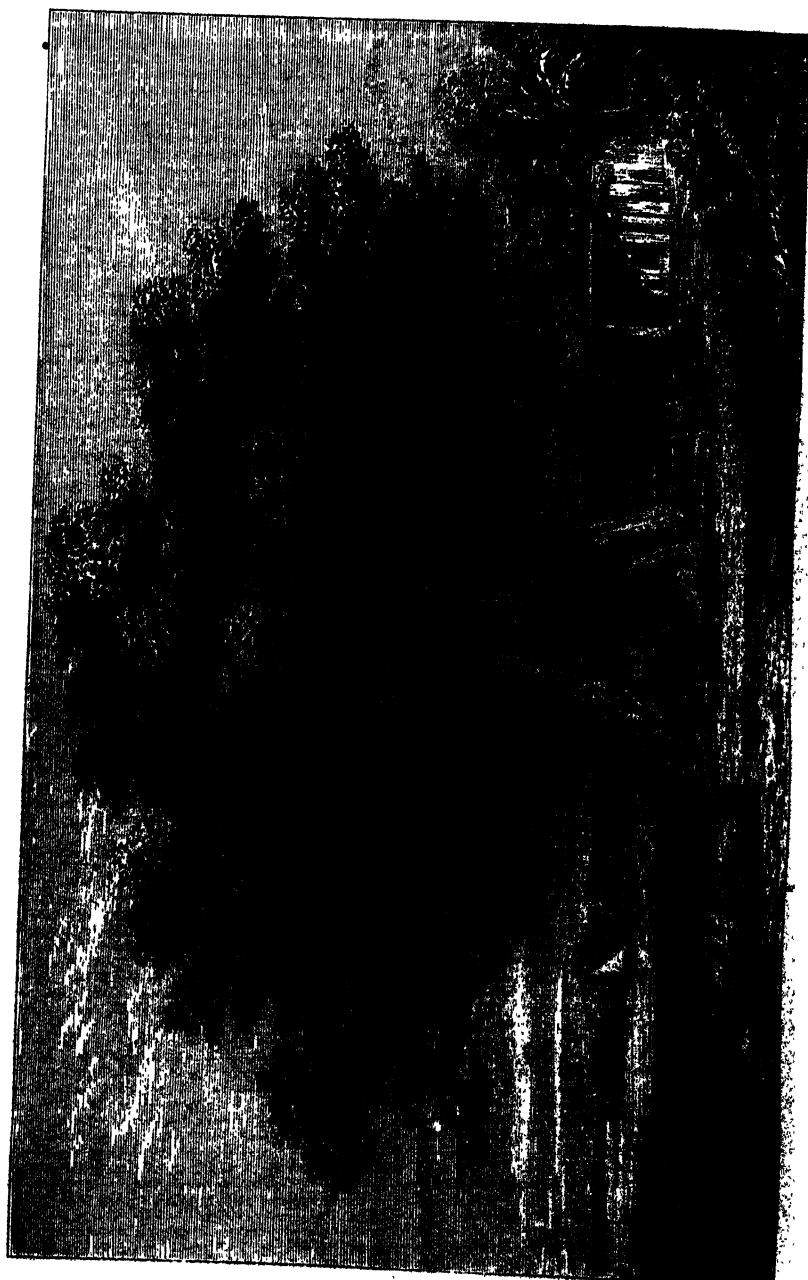
Meanwhile it is in the vicinity of Bostam or Damghan that I should incline to place this landmark. If no one *very* cogent reason points to this, a variety of minor ones do so; such as the direction of the traveller's journey from Kerman through Koh-Banan; the apparent vicinity of a great Ismaelite fortress, as will be noticed in the next

chapter; the connexion twice indicated (see *Prologue*, ch. xviii. note 6, and Book IV. ch. v.) of the Arbre Sec with the head-quarters of Ghazan Khan in watching the great passes, of which the principal ones debouche at Bostam, at which place also buildings erected by Ghazan still exist; and the statement that the decisive battle between Alexander and Darius was placed there by local tradition. For though no such battle took place in that region, we know that Darius was murdered near Hecatompylos. Some place this city west of Bostam, near Damghan; others east of it, about Jah Jerm; Ferrier has strongly argued for the vicinity of Bostam itself. Firdusi indeed places the final battle on the confines of Kerman, and the death of Darius within that province. But this could not have been the tradition Polo met with.

I may add that the temperate climate of Bostam is noticed in words almost identical with Polo's by both Fraser and Ferrier.

The Chinar abounds in Khorasan (as far as any tree can be said to *abound* in Persia), and even in the Oases of Tun-o-Kain wherever there is water. A traveller quoted by Ritter notices Chinars of great size and age at Shahrūd, near Bostam. Other remarkable specimens are mentioned at Meyomid, and at Mehr, west of Sabzawar, which last are said to date from the time of Naoshirwan (7th century). There is a town to the N.W. of Meshid called *Chinārān*, "The Planes."

The following note by De Sacy regarding the Chinar has already been quoted by Marsden, and though it may be doubtful whether the term Arbre Sec had any relation to the idea expressed, it seems to me too interesting to be omitted: "Its sterility seems to have become proverbial among certain people of the East. For in a collection of sundry moral sentences pertaining to the Sabaeans or Christians of St. John . . . we find the following: 'The vain-glorious man is like a showy Plane Tree, rich in boughs but producing nothing, and affording no fruit to its owner.'" And I add from Khanikoff another passage, though put forward in special illustration of what I believe to be a mistaken reading (*Arbre Sec*): "Where the Chinar is of spontaneous growth, or occupies the centre of a vast and naked plain, this tree is even in our own day invested with a quite exceptional veneration, and the locality often comes to be called 'The Place of the Solitary Tree.'" (*J. R. G. S.* XXIX. 345; *Ferrier*, 69-76; *Fraser*, 343; *Ritter*, VIII. 332, XI. 512 *seqq.*; *De Sacy's Abdallatif*, p. 81; *Khanikoff, Not.* p. 38.)



Chinar or Oriental Plane.



## CHAPTER XXIII.

## CONCERNING THE OLD MAN OF THE MOUNTAIN.

MULEHET is a country in which the Old Man of the Mountain dwelt in former days; and the name means "*Place of the Aram.*" I will tell you his whole history as related by Messer Marco Polo, who heard it from several natives of that region.<sup>1</sup>

The Old Man was called in their language ALOADIN. He had caused a certain valley between two mountains to be enclosed, and had turned it into a garden, the largest and most beautiful that ever was seen, filled with every variety of fruit. In it were erected pavilions and palaces the most elegant that can be imagined, all covered with gilding and exquisite painting. And there were runnels too, flowing freely with wine and milk and honey and water; and numbers of ladies, and of the most beautiful damsels in the world, who could play on all manner of instruments, and sung most sweetly, and danced in a manner that it was charming to behold. For the Old Man desired to make his people believe that this was actually Paradise. So he had fashioned it after the description that Mahomet gave of his Paradise, to wit, that it should be a beautiful garden running with conduits of wine and milk and honey and water, and full of lovely women for the delectation of all its inmates. And sure enough the Saracens of those parts believed that it *was* Paradise!

Now no man was allowed to enter the Garden save those whom he intended to be his ASHISHIN. There was a Fortress at the entrance to the Garden, strong enough to resist all the world, and there was no other way to get in. He kept at his Court a number of the youths of the country, from 12 to 20 years of age, such as had a taste for soldiering, and to these he used to tell tales about Paradise, just as Mahomet had been wont to do, and they

believed in him just as the Saracens believe in Mahomet. Then he would introduce them into his garden, some four, or six, or ten at a time, having first made them drink a certain potion which cast them into a deep sleep, and then causing them to be lifted and carried in. So when they awoke, they found themselves in the Garden.<sup>2</sup>

NOTE 1. — Marco in this chapter speaks of the Dynasty of the Ismaelites, a heretical secession from Islam, the chiefs of which were established in the mountainous districts of Northern Persia for about 170 years; and before their extinction by the Mongols had spread their dominion over the Eastern Kohistan, at least as far as Kám. Their head-quarters were at Mámú ("Eagle's Nest"), about 32 miles north-east of Kázwin, and all over the territory which they held they established fortresses of great strength. De Sacy seems to have proved that they were called *Hashishiya* or *Hashishin*, from their use of the preparation of hemp called *Hashish*, and thence through their system of murder and terrorism came the modern application of the word Assassin. I have adopted in the text one of the readings of the G. Text *Assiscin*, as expressing the original word with the greatest accuracy that Italian spelling admits. In another author we find it as *Chazisii* (see *Bollandists*, May, vol. ii. p. xi); Joinville calls them *Assacis*; whilst Nangis and others corrupt the name into *Harsacidar*, and what not.

The explanation of the name MULEHET as it is in Ramusio, or *Mulcete* as it is in the G. Text (the last expressing in Rusticiano's Pisan-tongue the strongly aspirated *Mulhité*), is given by the former: "This name of Mulehet is as much as to say in the Saracen tongue '*The Abode of Heretics*,' " the fact being that it does represent the Arabic term *Mulhid*, pl. *Mulhidah*, "Impii, heretici," which is in the Persian histories (as of Rashíduddín and Wassáf) the title most commonly used to indicate this community. The curious reading of the G. Text which we have preserved "*vaut à dire Des Aram*," should be read as we have rendered it. I conceive that Marco was here unconsciously using one Oriental term to explain another, and that *Aram* stands for *Harámi*, pl. *Harámiya*, "Impii, scelerati," where Freytag adds the example *Din-ul-Harámiya*, "Impiorum religio," seeming to point its application to heretics and the like.

In Pauthier's Text, instead of *Desaram*, we find "*veult dire en français Diex Terrien*," or Terrestrial God. This may have been substituted by a transcriber for *des Aram*, because he naturally could make nothing of the latter, and perhaps because he found the *Diex Terrien* in another part of the book as descriptive of a Tartar idol (see ch. liii.). But the error is of very early date. For in the romance of *Bauduin de Sebourg*, which I believe dates early in the

ing the extraordinary devotion of the followers of the Old Man (see note 1, ch. xxiv.), exclaims :

“ Par Mahon . . . . .  
Vous estes *Dieu en terre*, autre coze n'i a ! ”—I. p. 360.

So also Fr. Jacopo d'Aqui in the *Imago Mundi*, says of the Assassins : “ Dicitur iis quod sunt in Paradiso magno *Dei Terræni*.” Expressions, no doubt, taken in both cases from Polo's book.

Khanikoff, and before him J. R. Forster, have supposed that the name *Mulehet* represents *Alamût*. But the resemblance is much closer and more satisfactory to *Mulhid* or *Mulâhidah*. *Mulhet* is precisely the name by which the kingdom of the Ismaelites is mentioned in Armenian history, and *Mulihet* is already applied in the same way by Rabbi Benjamin in the 12th century; and by Rubruquis in the 13th. The Chinese narrative of Hulaku's expedition calls it the kingdom of *Mulahi*. (*J. As.* ser. 2, tom. xii. 285; *Benj. Tudela*, p. 106; *Rub.* p. 265; *Remusat, Nouv. Mélanges*, I. 176; *Gaubil*, p. 128; *Pauthier*, pp. cxxxix-cxli; *Mon. Hist. Patr. Scriptorum*, III. 1559, Turin, 1848.)

“ Old Man of the Mountain ” was the title applied by the Crusaders to the chief of that branch of the sect which was settled in the mountains north of Lebanon, being a translation of his popular Arabic title *Shaikh-ul-Fibal*. Whether the latter was really applied to the Prince of Alamut, I have not ascertained; but it is probable, as his territory was known as the *Balad-ul-Fibal*. (*Abulf.* in *Büsching*, V. 319.)

NOTE 2.—Boccaccio had perhaps read Marco. In the Decameron Day III. Nov. 8, we find a profligate abbot administering to an inconvenient personage “ a powder of marvellous efficacy, which in the East he had got from a great Prince, who declared it to be the same that the Old Man of the Mountain used to employ when he wished to transport any one in sleep into or out of his Paradise.”

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### HOW THE OLD MAN USED TO TRAIN HIS ASSASSINS.

WHEN therefore they awoke, and found themselves in a place so charming, they deemed that it was Paradise in very truth. And the ladies and damsels dallied with them to their heart's content, so that they had what young men would have; and with their own good will they never would have quitted the place.

Now this Prince whom we call the Old One kept his Court in grand and noble style, and made those simple hill-folks about him believe firmly that he was a great Prophet. And when he wanted one of his *Ashishin* to send on any mission, he would cause that potion whereof I spoke to be given to one of the youths in the garden, and then had him carried into his Palace. So when the young man awoke, he found himself in the Castle, and no longer in that Paradise: whereat he was not over well pleased. He was then conducted to the Old Man's presence, and bowed before him with great veneration as believing himself to be in the presence of a true Prophet. The Prince would then ask whence he came, and he would reply that he came from Paradise! and that it was exactly such as Mahommet had described it in the Law. This of course gave the others who stood by, and who had not been admitted, the greatest desire to enter therein.

So when the Old Man would have any Prince slain, he would say to such a youth: "Go thou and slay So and So: and when thou returnest my Angels shall bear thee into Paradise. And shouldst thou die, nathless even so will I send my Angels to carry thee back into Paradise." So he caused them to believe: and thus there was no order of his that they would not affront any peril to execute, for the great desire they had to get back into that Paradise of his. And in this manner the Old One got his people to murder any one whom he desired to get rid of. Thus, too, the great dread that he inspired all Princes withal, made them become his tributaries in order that he might abide at peace and amity with them.<sup>1</sup>

I should also tell you that the Old Man had certain others under him, who copied his proceedings and acted exactly in the same manner. One of these was sent into the Territory of Damascus, and the other into Curdistan.

NOTE 1.—Romantic as this story is, it seems to be precisely the same that was current over all the East. It is given by Odoric at length, more briefly by a Chinese author, and again from an Arabic source by Hammer in the *Mines de l'Orient*.

The following is the Chinese account as rendered by Rémusat: "The soldiers of this country (Mulahi) are veritable brigands. When they see a lusty youth, they tempt him with the hope of gain, and bring him to such a point that he will be ready to kill his father or his elder brother with his own hand. After he is enlisted, they intoxicate him, and carry him in that state into a secluded retreat, where he is charmed with delicious music and beautiful women. All his desires are satisfied for several days, and then (in sleep) he is transported back to his original position. When he awakes, they ask what he has seen? He is then informed that if he will become an Assassin, he will be rewarded with the same happiness. And with the texts and prayers that they teach him they heat him to such a pitch that whatever commission be given him he will brave death without regret in order to execute it."

The Arabic narrative is too long to extract. It is from a kind of historical romance called *The Memoirs of Hakim*, the date of which Hammer unfortunately omits to give. Its close coincidence in substance with Polo's story is quite remarkable. After a detailed description of the Paradise, and the transfer into it of the aspirant under the influence of *bang*, on his awaking and seeing his chief enter, he says, "O chief! am I awake or am I dreaming?" To which the chief: "O such an One, take heed that thou tell not the dream to any stranger. Know that Ali thy Lord hath vouchsafed to show thee the place destined for thee in Paradise. . . . Hesitate not a moment therefore in the service of the Imam who thus deigns to intimate his contentment with thee," and so on.

William de Nangis thus speaks of the Syrian Shaikh who alone was known to the Crusaders, though one of their historians (*Jacques de Vitry*, in *Bongars*, I. 1062) shows knowledge that the head-quarters of the sect was in Persia: "He was much dreaded far and near, by both Saracens and Christians, because he so often caused princes of both classes indifferently to be murdered by his emissaries. For he used to bring up in his palace youths belonging to his territory, and had them taught a variety of languages, and above all things to fear their Lord and obey him unto death, which would thus become to them an entrance into the joys of Paradise. And whosoever of them thus perished in carrying out his Lord's behests was worshipped as an angel." As an instance of the implicit obedience rendered by the *Fiddwi* or devoted disciples of the Shaikh, Fra Pipino and Marino Sanuto relate that when Henry Count of Champagne (titular King of Jerusalem) was on a visit to the Old Man of Syria, one day as they walked together they saw some lads in white sitting on the top of a high tower. The Shaikh, turning to the Count, asked if he had any subjects as obedient as his

own? and without giving time for reply made a sign to two of the boys, who immediately leapt from the tower, and were killed on the spot. The same story is told in the *Cento Novelle Antiche*, as happening when the Emperor Frederic was on a visit (imaginary) to the Veglio. And it is introduced likewise as an incident in the Romance of Bauduin de Sebourg :

“ Vollés veioir merveilles ? dist li Rois Seignouris ”

to Bauduin and his friends, and on their assenting he makes the signal to one of his men on the battlements, and in a twinkling

“ Quant le vinrent en l'air silant de tel avris,  
Et aussi liément, et aussi esjois,  
Qu'il deust conquerer mul livres de parisis :  
Ains qu'il venist a tière il fut mors et fens,  
Sur les roches agues des rompus corps et pis. ” &c.

(*Cathay*, 153 ; *Rémusat*, *Nouv. Mém.* t. 178 ; *Mémoires de l'Orient*, III. 201 *seqq.* ; *Nangis* in *Duchesne*, V. 332 ; *Pipino* in *Muratori*, IX. 705 ; *Defréméry* in *J. As.* ser. 5. tom. v. 34 *seqq.* ; *Cent. Nov. Antiche*, Firenze, 1572, p. 91 ; *Bauduin de Sebourg*, l. 359.)

The following are some of the more notable murders or attempts at murder ascribed to the Ismaelite emissaries either from Syria or from Persia :—

A.D. 1092. Nizam ul-Mulk, formerly the powerful minister of Malik Shah, Seljukian sovereign of Persia, and a little later his two sons. 1102. The Prince of Homs, in the chief Mosque of that city. 1113. Maudúð, Prince of Mosul, in the chief Mosque of Damascus. About 1114. Abul Muzafar 'Ali, Wazir of Sanjár Shah, and Chakar Beg, grand-uncle of the latter. 1116. Ahmed Yel, Prince of Maragha, at Baghdad, in the presence of Mahomed, Sultan of Persia. 1121. The Amir Afdhal, the powerful Wazir of Egypt, at Cairo. 1126. Kasim Aksonkor, Prince of Mosul and Aleppo, in the Great Mosque at Mosul. 1127. Moyin-uddin, Wazir of Sanjar Shah of Persia. 1129. Amír Billah, Khalif of Egypt. 1131. Taj-ul Mulúk Buri, Prince of Damascus. 1134. Shams-ul-Mulúk, son of the preceding. 1135-38. The Khalif Mostarshid, the Khalif Rashíd, and Daúd, Seljukian Prince of Adherbaijan. 1149. Raymond, Count of Tripoli. 1191. Kizil Arzlan, Prince of Adherbaijan. 1192. Conrad of Montferrat, titular King of Jerusalem.

Add in 1174 and 1176 attempts to murder the great Saladin. 1271. Attempt to murder Ala'uddin Juwaini, Governor of Baghdad and historian of the Mongols. 1272. The attempt to murder Prince Edward of England at Acre.

In latter years the *Fidawi* or Ismaelite adepts appear to have let out their services simply as hired assassins. Bibars, in a letter to his court at Cairo, boasts of using them when needful. A Mahomedan

author ascribes to Bibars the instigation of the attempt on Prince Edward. (*Makrizi*, II. 100; *J. As.* XI. 150.)

NOTE 2.—Hammer mentions as “Grand Priors” under the Shaikh or Grand Master at Alamût, the chief in Syria, one in the Kuhistan of E. Persia (Tun-o-Kaïn), one in Kumis (the country about Damghan and Bostam), and one in Irák; he does not speak of any in Kurdistan. Colonel Monteith however says, though without stating authority or particulars, “There were several divisions of them (the Assassins) scattered throughout Syria, *Kurdistan* (near the Lake of Wan), and Asia Minor, but all acknowledging as Inaum or High Priest the Chief residing at Alamut.” And it may be noted that Odoric puts the Old Man at *Millescorte*, which looks like *Malasgird*, north of Lake Van. (*H. des Assass.* p. 104; *J. R. G. S.* III. 16; *Cathay*, p. cccliii.)

## CHAPTER XXV.

### HOW THE OLD MAN CAME BY HIS END.

Now it came to pass, in the year of Christ's Incarnation 1252, that Alaü, Lord of the Tartars of the Levant, heard tell of these great crimes of the Old Man, and resolved to make an end of him. So he took and sent one of his Barons with a great Army to that Castle, and they besieged it for three years, but they could not take it, so strong was it. And indeed if they had had food within it never would have been taken. But after being besieged those three years they ran short of victual, and were taken. The Old Man was put to death with all his men [and the Castle with its Garden of Paradise was levelled with the ground]. And since that time he has had no successor; and there was an end to all his villainies.<sup>1</sup>

Now let us go back to our journey.

NOTE 1.—The date in Pauthier is 1242; in the G. T. and in Ramusio 1262. Neither is right, nor certainly could Polo have meant the former.

When Mangu Kaan, after his enthronement (1251), determined at a

great *Kurultai* or Diet, on perfecting the Mongol conquests, he entrusted his brother Kublaï with the completion of the subjugation of China and the adjacent countries, whilst his brother Hulaku received the command of the army destined for Persia and Syria. The complaints that came from the Mongol officers already in Persia determined him to commence with the reduction of the Ismaelites, and Hulaku set out from Karakorum in February 1254. He proceeded with great deliberation, and the Oxus was not crossed till January 1256. But an army had been sent long in advance under "one of his Barons," Kitubuka Noyan, and in 1253 it was already actively engaged in besieging the Ismaelite fortresses. In 1255, during the progress of the war, ALA'UDDIN MAHOMED, the reigning Prince of the Assassins (mentioned by Polo as Alaodin), was murdered at the instigation of his son Ruknuddin Khurshah, who succeeded to the authority. A year later (Nov. 1256) Ruknuddin surrendered to Hulaku. The fortresses given up, all well furnished with provisions and artillery engines, were 100 in number. Two of them, however, Lembeser and Girdkuh, refused to surrender. The former fell after a year; the latter is stated to have held out for *twenty years*, actually, as it would seem, about fourteen, or till December 1270. Ruknuddin was well treated by Hulaku, and despatched to the Court of the Kaan. The accounts of his death differ, but that most commonly alleged, according to Rashiduddin, is that Mangu Kaan was irritated at hearing of his approach, asking why his post-horses should be fagged to no purpose, and sent executioners to put Ruknuddin to death on the road. Alamut had been surrendered without any substantial resistance. Some survivors of the sect got hold of it again in 1275-6, and held out for a time. The dominion was extinguished but the sect remained, though scattered indeed and obscure. Traces of them exist in Persia still. Early in this century at least their Shaikh resided at Yezd, and more recently Abbott mentions the sect as still existing in Kerman. The *Bohrams* of Western India are said to be an offshoot of the Ismaelites.

A Chinese account of the expedition of Hulaku will be found in Rémusat's *Nouveaux Mélanges* (I.), and in Pauthier's Introduction. (*Q. R.* 115-219, esp. 213; *Ich.* vol. I.; *Fraser*, 376-7.)

There is some account of the rock of Alamut and its exceedingly slender traces of occupancy, by Col. Monteith, in *J. R. G. S.* III. 15, and again by Sir Justin Shiel in vol. VIII. p. 431. There does not seem to be any specific authority for assigning the Paradise of the Shaikh to Alamut; and it is at least worthy of note that another of the castles of the Muláhidah, destroyed by Hulaku, was called *Firdús*, i.e. Paradise. In any case I see no reason to suppose that Polo visited Alamut, which would have been quite out of the road that he is following.

It is possible that "the Castle," to which he alludes at the beginning of next chapter, and which set him off upon this digression, was *Girdkuh*. It has not, as far as I know, been identified by modern travellers, but it stood within 10 or 12 miles of Damghan (to the west or north-west). It



is probably the *Tigado* of Hayton, of which he thus speaks: "The Assassins had an impregnable castle called Tigado, which was furnished with all necessities, and was so strong that it had no fear of attack on any side. Howbeit, Haloön commanded a certain captain of his that he should take 10,000 Tartars who had been left in garrison in Persia, and with them lay siege to the said castle, and not leave it till he had taken it. Wherefore the said Tartars continued besieging it for seven whole years, winter and summer, without being able to take it. At last the Assassins surrendered, from sheer want of clothing, but not of victuals or other necessities." This is Ramusio's version, but in other copies the length of siege is called 27 years, and in any case it is a general confirmation of the fact that Girdkuh was said to have held out for an extraordinary length of time. If Rashiduddin is right in naming 1270 as the date of its surrender, it would be quite a recent event when the Polo party passed, and draw special attention to the spot. (*J. As.* ser. 4, tom. xiii. 48; *Ish.* I. 93, 104, 274; *Q. R.* p. 278; *Ritter*, VIII. 336.)

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### CONCERNING THE CITY OF SAPURGAN.

ON leaving the Castle, you ride over fine plains and beautiful valleys, and pretty hillsides producing excellent grass-pasture, and abundance of fruits, and all other products. Armies are glad to take up their quarters here on account of the plenty that exists. This kind of country extends for six days' journey, with a goodly number of towns and villages, in which the people are worshippers of Mahommet. Sometimes also you meet with a tract of desert extending for 50 or 60 miles, or somewhat less, and in these deserts you find no water, but have to carry it along with you. The beasts do without drink until you have got across the desert tract and come to watering places.

So after travelling for six days as I have told you, you come to a city called SAPURGAN. It has great plenty of everything, but especially of the very best melons in the world. They preserve them by paring them round and

round into strips, and drying them in the sun. When dry they are sweeter than honey, and are carried off for sale all over the country. There is also abundance of game here, both of birds and beasts.<sup>1</sup>

NOTE 1.—SAPURGAN probably closely expresses the pronunciation of the name of the city which the old Arabic writers call *Sabūrkan* and *Shabūrkan*, now called *Shibrgān*, lying some 90 miles west of Balkh; containing now some 12,000 inhabitants, and situated in a plain still richly cultivated. But I have seen no satisfactory solution of the difficulties as to the time assigned. This in the G. T. and in Ramusio is clearly six days. The point of departure is indeed uncertain, but even if we were to place that at Sharukhs on the extreme verge of cultivated Khorasan, which would be quite inconsistent with other data, it would have taken the travellers something like double the time to reach Shibrgan. Where I have followed the G. T. in its reading "*quant l'en a chevauché six jorne tel che je vos ai cont's, adun treuve l'en une cité*," &c., Pauthier's text has "*Et quant l'en a chevauché les vi cités si treuve l'en une cité qui a nom Sapurgan*," and to this that editor adheres. But I suspect that *cités* is a mere lapsus for *journées*, as in the reading in one of his three MSS. What could be meant by "*les vi cités*"? What kind of French, old or new, is "*chevauchier vi cités*"?

Whether the true route be, as I suppose, by Nishapur and Meshid, or, as Khanikoff supposes, by Herat and Badghis, it is strange that no one of those famous cities is mentioned. And we feel constrained to assume that something has been misunderstood in the dictation, or has dropt out of it. As a *probable* conjecture I should apply the six days to the extent of pleasing country described in the first lines of the chapter, and identify it with the tract between Sabzawur and the cessation of fertile country beyond Meshid. The distance would agree well, and a comparison with Fraser or Ferrier will show that even now the description, allowing for the compression of an old recollection, would be well founded; e.g. on the first march beyond Nishapur: "Fine villages, with plentiful gardens full of trees, that bear fruit of the highest flavour, may be seen all along the foot of the hills, and in the little recesses formed by the ravines whence issues the water that irrigates them. It was a rich and pleasing scene, and out of question by far the most populous and cultivated tract that I had seen in Persia. . . . Next morning we quitted Derrood . . . by a very indifferent but interesting road, the glen being finely wooded with walnut, mulberry, poplar, and willow-trees, and fruit-tree gardens rising one above the other upon the mountain-side, watered by little rills. . . . These gardens extended for several miles up the glen; beyond them the bank of the stream continued to be fringed with white sycamore, willow, ash, mulberry, poplar,

and woods that love a moist situation," and so on, describing a style of scenery not common in Persia, and expressing diffusely (as it seems to me) the same picture as Polo's two lines. (See *Fraser*, 405, 432-3, 434, 436.)

With reference to the dried melons of Shibrgan, Quatremère cites a history of Herat, which speaks of them almost in Polo's words. Ibn Batuta gives a like account of the melons of Khwarizm: "The surprising thing about these melons is the way the people have of slicing them, drying them in the sun, and then packing them in baskets, just as Malaga figs are treated in our part of the world. In this state they are sent to the remotest parts of India and China. There is no dried fruit so delicious, and all the while I lived at Delhi, when the travelling dealers came in, I never missed sending for these dried strips of melon." (*Q. R.* 169; *I. B.* III. 15.)

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### OF THE CITY OF BALC.

BALC is a noble city and a great, though it was much greater in former days. But the Tartars and other nations have greatly ravaged and destroyed it. There were formerly many fine palaces and buildings of marble, and the ruins of them still remain. The people of the city tell that it was here that Alexander took to wife the daughter of Darius.

Here, you should be told, is the end of the empire of the Tartar Lord of the Levant. And this city is also the limit of Persia in the direction between east and north-east.<sup>1</sup>

Now, let us quit this city, and I will tell you of another country called DOGANA.<sup>2</sup>

When you have quitted the city of which I have been speaking, you ride some 12 days between north-east and east, without finding any human habitation, for the people have all taken refuge in fastnesses among the mountains, on account of the banditti and armies that harassed them. There is plenty of water on the road, and abundance of game; there are lions too. You can get no provisions on

the road, and must carry with you all that you require for these 12 days.'

NOTE 1.—BALKH, "the mother of cities," suffered mercilessly from Chinghiz. Though the city had yielded without resistance, the whole population was marched by companies into the plain, on the usual Mongol pretext of counting them, and then brutally massacred. The city and its gardens were fired, and all buildings capable of defence were levelled. The province long continued to be harried by the Chaghataian inroads. Ibn Batuta, sixty years after Marco's visit, describes the city as still in ruins, and as uninhabited: "The remains of its mosques and colleges," he says, "are still to be seen, and the painted walls traced with azure." It is no doubt the Vaeq (*Talq*) of Clavijo, "very large, and surrounded by a broad earthen wall, thirty paces across, but breached in many parts." He describes a large portion of the area within as sown with cotton. The account of its modern state in Burnes and Ferrier is much the same as Ibn Batuta's, except that there is now some population, two separate towns within the walls according to the latter. Burnes estimates the circuit of the ruins at twenty miles.

(*Erdmann*, 404-5; *I. B.* III. 59; *Clavijo*, p. 117; *Burnes*, II. 204-6; *Ferrier*, 206-7.)

According to the legendary history of Alexander, the beautiful Roxana was the daughter of Darius, and her father in a dying interview with Alexander requested the latter to make her his wife:—

- • Une fille au mult bele; se prendre le volés,  
Vus en serés de l'mont tout li mius maries," &c.  
*Lambert I. Court*, p. 256.

NOTE 2.—The country called *Dogana* in the G. Text is a puzzle. At one time I supposed it might be *Kataghin*, the name sometimes applied to the country round Kunduz. But there seems reason to believe this to be a modern Uzbek appellation.

Wassáf says that in the year 700 (A.D. 1300) an invasion of Chaghataian Mongols subjugated all Ghazni, Sistan, and Balkh, with its dependencies *Shahurgan*, Jurgana, *Badakhshan*, *Kishm*, *Taikan*, &c. This juxtaposition certainly looks very like our traveller's *Sagurgan*, *Balc*, *Dogana*, *Taican*, *Casem*, *Badashan*. *Juzgán*, *JUZGÁNÁ*, or *Juz-jánd*, the *Hushikien* of the Chinese traveller Hwen Thsang, was a part of the province of Balkh, which included *Anekhoi*, *Shibrgan*, and apparently the hill-country south of Balkh. It was *not*, therefore, the country traversed by the traveller on leaving Balkh for Badakhshan. But it is possible that, having said "Now let us tell of another country called Dogana," he does no such thing, but breaks off and proceeds with his journey. Something like this occurs in Book III. (ch. ix.) with reference

to the Island of Gavenispola, and 'tis an easy accident of dictation. But it is a confessed difficulty, and these are merely suggestions of a possible solution.

I may add that I believe Juzgana to be the *Tagiginea* of Clavijo. (*Sprenger, P. und R. Route*, p. 39 and Map; *Anderson in J. A. S. B. XXII.* 161; *Ilch.* II. 93.)

NOTE 3.—Though Burnes speaks of a part of the road that we suppose necessarily to have been here followed from Balkh towards Taican, as barren and dreary, he adds that the ruins of *aqueducts* and houses proved that the land had at one time been peopled, though now destitute of water, and consequently of inhabitants. The country would seem to have reverted at the time of Burnes' journey, from like causes, nearly to the state in which Marco found it after the Mongol devastations.

*Lions* seem to mean here the real kings of beasts, and not tigers, as hereafter in the book. Tigers, though found on the S. and W. shores of the Caspian, do not seem to exist in the Oxus valley. On the other hand, Rashiduddin tells us that, when Hulaku was reviewing his army after the passage of the river, several lions were started, and two were killed. The lions are also mentioned by Sidi 'Ali, the Turkish Admiral, further down the valley towards Hazárasp: "We were obliged to fight with the lions day and night, and no man dared to go alone for water." And Moorcroft says of the plain between Kunduz and the Oxus: "Deer, foxes, wolves, hogs, and *lions* are numerous, the latter resembling those in the vicinity of Hariana" (in Upper India). Q. Curtius tells how Alexander killed a great lion in the country north of the Oxus towards Samarkand. (*Burnes*, II. 200; *Q. R.* 155; *Ilch.* I. 90; *J. As.* IX. 217; *Moore*, II. 430; *Q. C.* VII. 2.)

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

OF TAICAN, AND THE MOUNTAINS OF SALT. ALSO OF THE PROVINCE OF CASEM.

**AFTER** those twelve days' journey you come to a fortified place called TAICAN, where there is a great corn market. It is a fine place, and the mountains that you see towards the south are all composed of salt. People from all the countries round, to some thirty days' journey, come to fetch this salt, which is the best in the world, and is so hard that it can only be broken with iron picks. 'Tis in such abun-

dance that it would supply the whole world to the end of time. [Other mountains there grow almonds and pistachios, which are exceedingly cheap.]<sup>2</sup>

When you leave this town and ride three days further between north-east and east, you meet with many fine tracts full of vines and other fruits, and with a goodly number of habitations, and everything to be had very cheap. The people are worshippers of Mahomet, and are an evil and a murderous generation, whose great delight is in the wine shop; for they have good wine (albeit it be boiled), and are great toppers; in fact, they are constantly getting drunk. They wear nothing on the head but a cord some ten palms long twisted round it. They are excellent huntsmen, and take a great deal of game; in fact, they wear nothing but the skins of the beasts they have taken in the chase, for they make of them both coats and shoes. Indeed, all of them are acquainted with the art of dressing skins for these purposes.<sup>3</sup>

When you have ridden those three days, you find a town called CASEM,<sup>4</sup> which is subject to a count. His other towns and villages are on the hills, but through this town there flows a river of some size. There are a great many porcupines hereabouts, and very large ones too. When hunted with dogs, several of them will get together and huddle close, shooting their quills at the dogs, which get many a serious wound thereby.<sup>5</sup>

This town of Casem is at the head of a very great province, which is also called Casem. The people have a peculiar language. The peasants who keep cattle abide in the mountains, and have their dwellings in caves, which form fine and spacious houses for them, and are made with ease, as the hills are composed of earth.<sup>6</sup>

After leaving the town of Casem, you ride for three days without finding a single habitation, or anything to eat or drink, so that you have to carry with you everything that you require. At the end of those three days you

reach a province called Badashan, about which we shall now tell you.<sup>7</sup>

NOTE 1.—The *Taican* of Polo is the still existing TALIKAN in the province of Kataghan or Kunduz, but it bears the former name (*Tháikán*) in the old Arab geographers. Both names are used by Baber, who says it lay in the *Uluḡ Bāgh*, or Great Garden, a name perhaps acquired by the Plains of Talikan in happier days, but illustrating what Polo says of the next three days' march. The Castle of Talikan, called *Nukra Kuh*, or "Silver Hill," resisted Chinghiz for seven months, and met with the usual fate (1221). Wood speaks of Talikan thirty years ago as a poor place of some 300 or 400 houses, mere hovels. Market days are not usual in Upper India or Kabul, but are universal in Badakhshan and the Oxus provinces. The bazaars are only open on those days, and the people from the surrounding country then assemble to exchange goods, generally by barter. Wood chances to note: "A market was held at Talikan . . . the thronged state of the roads leading into it soon apprized us that the day was no ordinary one." (*Abulf.* in *Büsching*, V. 352; *Sprenger*, p. 50; *P. de la Croix*, I. 63; *Baber*, 38, 130; *Burnes*, IV. 8; *Wood*, 241-2; *Pandit Manphul's Report*.)

The distance of Talikan from Balkh is about 170 miles, which gives very short marches, if twelve days be the correct reading. Ramusio has *two* days, which is certainly wrong. XII. is easily miswritten for VII., which would be a just number.

NOTE 2.—In our day, as I learn from Pandit Manphul, the mines of rock salt are at Ak Bulák, near the Lataband Pass, and at Darúná, in the Karligh, or Kallakh Tract, and these supply the whole of Badakhshan, as well as Kunduz and Chitral. The former site certainly (and I believe the latter also) is due *east* of Talikan. But the name of a river that flows from the mountains on the south—*Shor-Ah*, or Salt River—may indicate deposits also in that direction which may formerly have been worked. There are also mines of rock salt in Kuláb, north of the Oxus. (See *Wood*, 399, and *Burnes*, III. 144.)

Both pistachioes and wild almonds are mentioned by Pandit Manphul; and see *Wood* (p. 383) on the beauty and profusion of the latter.

NOTE 3.—Wood thinks that the Tajik inhabitants of Badakhshan and the adjoining districts are substantially of the same race as the Kafir tribes of Hindu Kush. At the time of Polo's visit it would seem that their conversion to Islam was imperfect. They were probably in that transition state which obtains in our own day for some of the Hill Mahomedans adjoining the Kafirs on the south side of the mountains the reproachful title of *Nimchi Musulmán*, or Half-and-halves. Thus they would seem to have retained sundry Kafir characteristics; among others, that love of wine which is so strong among the Kafirs. The

boiling of the wine is noted by Baber (a connoisseur) as the custom of Nijrao, adjoining, if not then included in, Kafir-land; and Elphinstone implies the continuance of the custom when he speaks of the Kafirs as having wine of *the consistence of jelly*, and very strong. The cord twisted round the head was probably also a relic of Kafir costume: "Few of the Kafirs cover the head, and when they do, it is with a narrow band or fillet of goat's hair . . . about a yard or a yard and a half in length, wound round the head." Something very similar, *i.e.* a scanty turban cloth twisted into a mere cord, and wound two or three times round the head is often seen in the Panjab to this day.

The *Postin* or sheepskin coat is almost universal on both sides of the Hindu Kush; and Wood notes: "The shoes in use resemble half-boots, made of goatskin, and mostly of home manufacture." (*Baber*, 145; *J. A. S. B.* XXVIII. 348, 361; *Elphinst.* II. 384; *Wood*, 274, 333; *J. R. A. S.* XIX. 2.)

NOTE 4. -- Marsden was right in identifying *Scassem* or *Casem* with the *Kechem* of D'Anville's Map, but wrong in confounding the latter with the *Kishnabad* of Elphinstone—properly, I believe, *Kishnabad*—in the Anderab Valley. Kishm, or Keshm, found its way into maps through Petis de la Croix, from whom probably D'Anville adopted it: but as it was ignored by Elphinstone (or by Macartney, who constructed his map), and by Burnes, it dropped out of our geography. Indeed Wood does not notice it except as giving name to a high hill called the Hill of Kishm, and the position even of that he omits to indicate. The frequent mention of Kishm in the histories of Timur and Humayun (*e.g.* *P. de la Croix*, I. 167; *N. et E.* XIV. 223, 491; *Erskine's Baber and Humayun*, II. 330, 355, &c.) had enabled me to determine its position within tolerably narrow limits; but, desiring to fix it definitely, I applied through Col. Maclagan to Pandit Manphul, C.S.I., a very intelligent Hindu gentleman, who resided for some time in Badakhshan as agent of the Panjab Government, and from him I received a special note and sketch, and afterwards a MS. copy of a Report, which set the position of Kishm at rest.

KISHM is now a small town or large village on the right bank of the river of Mashhad, a tributary of the Kokcha. It was in 1866 the seat of a district ruler under the Mir of Badakhshan, who was styled the Mir of Kishm, and corresponded in recent times to Marco's *Quens* or Count. The modern caravan-road between Kunduz and Badakhshan does not pass through Kishm, which is left some five miles to the right, but through the town of Mashhad, which stands on the banks of the same river. Kishm is the warmest district of Badakhshan. Its fruits are abundant, and ripen a month earlier than those at Faizabad, the capital of that country. The Mashhad river is Marco's "*Flum auques grant*." Wood (247) calls it "the largest stream we had yet forded in Badakhshan."

M. Pauthier's location of Kishm near Taish Khan is not very far from the truth, but the latter lies in a different valley.



It is very notable that in Ramusio, in Pipino, and in one passage of the G. Text, the name is written *Seasem*, which has led some to suppose the *Ish-Kāshm* of Wood to be meant. That place is much too far east—in fact, beyond the city which forms the subject of next chapter. The apparent hesitation, however, between the forms *Casem* and *Seasem* suggests that the Kishm of our note may formerly have been termed S'kāshm or Ish-Kāshm, a form frequent in the Oxus Valley, e.g. *Ish-Kimish*, *Ish-Kāshm*, *Ishtrakh*, *Ishpingao*. Gen. Cunningham judiciously suggests (*Ladak*, 34) that this form is merely a vocal corruption of the initial *S* before a consonant, a combination which always troubles the Musulman in India, and converts every Mr. Smith or Mr. Sparks into Ismit or Ispak Sahib.

NOTE 5.—The belief that the porcupine *projected* its quills at its assailants was an ancient and persistent one—"cum intendit cutem *missilis*," says Pliny (VIII. 35, and see also *Actian. de Nat. An.* I. 31), and is held by the Chinese as it was held by the ancients, but is universally rejected by modern zoologists. The huddling and coiling appears to be a true characteristic, for the porcupine always tries to shield its head.

NOTE 6.—The description of Kishm as a "very great" province is an example of a bad habit of Marco's, which recurs in the next chapter. What he says of the cave-dwellings may be illustrated by Burnes's account of the excavations at Bamian, in a neighbouring district. These "still form the residence of the greater part of the population. . . . The hills at Bamian are formed of indurated clay and pebbles, which renders this excavation a matter of little difficulty." Similar occupied excavations are noticed by Moorcroft at Heibak and other places towards Khulm.

Curiously, Pandit Manphul says of the districts about the Kokcha: "Both their hills and plains are productive, the former *being mostly composed of earth, having very little of rocky substance*."

NOTE 7.—The capital of Badakhshan is now Faizabad, on the right bank of the Kokcha, founded by Yarbeg, the first Mīr of the recent dynasty.\* When this family was displaced by Murad Beg of Künduz in the early part of this century, the place was abandoned for years, but is now reoccupied. The ancient capital of Badakhshan, and presumably the city so called by our Traveller, stood in the Dasht (or Plain) of Baharak, one of the most extensive pieces of level in Badakhshan, in which the rivers Vardoj, Zardeo, and Sarghalan unite with the Kokcha. As far as I can estimate, by the help of Wood and the map I have compiled, this will be from 100 to 110 miles distant from Talikan, and will therefore suit fairly with the six marches that Marco lays down.

\* *Manphul*. He assigns Faizabad to the 17th century, but I suspect means 18th, as in another passage he dates the recent dynasty from only 125 years back.

Wood, in 1838, found the whole country between Talikan and Faizabad nearly as depopulated as Marco found that between Kishm and Badakhshan. The modern depopulation was due—in part, at least—to the recent oppressions and *razzias* of the Uzbegs of Kunduz. On their expulsion the native Mirs were reinstated, and these again have very recently been expelled by the Afghans.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### OF THE PROVINCE OF BADASHAN.

BADASHAN is a Province inhabited by people who worship Mahomet, and have a peculiar language. It forms a very great kingdom, and the royalty is hereditary. All those of the royal blood are descended from King Alexander and the daughter of King Darius, who was Lord of the vast Empire of Persia. And all these kings call themselves in the Saracen tongue *ZULCARNAIN*, which is as much as to say *Alexander*; and this out of regard for Alexander the Great.<sup>1</sup>

It is in this province that those fine and valuable gems the Balas Rubies are found. They are got in certain rocks among the mountains, and in the search for them the people dig great caves underground, just as is done by miners for silver. There is but one special mountain that produces them, and it is called *SYGHINAN*. The stones are dug on the king's account, and no one else dares dig in that mountain on pain of forfeiture of life as well as goods; nor may any one carry the stones out of the kingdom. But the king amasses them all, and sends them to other kings when he has tribute to render, or when he desires to offer a friendly present; and such only as he pleases he causes to be sold. Thus he acts in order to keep the Balas at a high value; for if he were to allow everybody to dig, they would extract so many that the world would be glutted with them, and they would cease

to bear any value. Hence it is that he allows so few to be taken out, and is so strict in the matter.<sup>2</sup>

There is also in the same country another mountain, in which azure is found; 'tis the finest in the world, and is got in a vein like silver. There are also other mountains which contain a great amount of silver ore, so that the country is a very rich one; but it is also (it must be said) a very cold one.<sup>3</sup> It produces numbers of excellent horses, remarkable for their speed. They are not shod at all, although constantly used in mountainous country, and on very bad roads. [They go at a great pace even down steep descents, where other horses neither would nor could do the like. And Messer Marco was told that not long ago they possessed in that province a breed of horses from the strain of Alexander's horse Bucephalus, all of which had from their birth a particular mark on the forehead. This breed was entirely in the hands of an uncle of the king's; and in consequence of his refusing to let the king have any of them, the latter put him to death. The widow then, in despite, destroyed the whole breed, and it is now extinct.]

The mountains of this country also supply Saker falcons of excellent flight, and plenty of Lanners likewise. Beasts and birds for the chase there are in great abundance. Good wheat is grown, and also barley without husk. They have no olive oil, but make oil from sesamé, and also from walnuts.<sup>4</sup>

[In the mountains there are vast numbers of sheep—400, 500, or 600 in a single flock, and all of them wild; and though many of them are taken, they never seem to get aught the scarcer.]

Those mountains are so lofty that 'tis a hard day's work, from morning till evening, to get to the top of them. On getting up, you find an extensive plain, with great abundance of grass and trees, and copious springs of pure water running down through rocks and ravines. In

those brooks are found trout and many other fish of dainty kinds; and the air in those regions is so pure, and residence there so healthful, that when the men who dwell below in the towns, and in the valleys and plains, find themselves attacked by any kind of fever or other ailment that may hap, they lose no time in going to the hills; and after abiding there two or three days, they quite recover their health through the excellence of that air. And Messer Marco said he had proved this by experience: for when in those parts he had been ill for about a year, but as soon as he was advised to visit that mountain, he did so and got well at once.<sup>6</sup>]

In this kingdom there are many strait and perilous passes, so difficult to force that the people have no fear of invasion. Their towns and villages also are on lofty hills, and in very strong positions.<sup>7</sup> They are excellent archers, and much given to the chase: indeed, most of them are dependent for clothing on the skins of beasts, for stuffs are very dear among them. The great ladies, however, are arrayed in stuffs, and I will tell you the style of their dress! They all wear drawers made of cotton cloth, and into the making of these some will put 60, 80, or even 100 ells of stuff. This they do to make themselves look large in the hips, for the men of those parts think that to be a great beauty in a woman.<sup>8</sup>

---

NOTE 1.—“The population of Badakhshan Proper is composed of Tajiks, Turks, and Arabs, who are all Sunnis, following the orthodox doctrines of the Mahomedan law, and speak Persian and Turki, whilst the people of the more mountainous tracts are Tajiks of the Shiá creed, having separate provincial dialects or languages of their own, the inhabitants of the principal places combining therewith a knowledge of Persian. Thus, the *Shighnáni* is spoken in Shignán and Roshán, the *Ishkákshami* in Ishkáksham, the *Wakhi* in Wakhán, the *Sanglíchi* in Sanglich and Zebák, and the *Minjáni* in Minján. All these dialects materially differ from each other” (*Pand. Mánphul*). It may be considered almost certain that Badakhshan proper also had a peculiar dialect in Polo’s time.

The Legend of the Alexandrian pedigree of the Kings of Badakh-

shan is spoken of by Baber, and by earlier Eastern authors. This pedigree is, or was, claimed also by the chiefs of Darwáz, Kuláb, Shighnán, Wakhán, Chitrál, Gilgit, Swát, and Bálti. Some samples of those genealogies may be seen in that strange document called Gardner's Travels.

In Badakhshan Proper the story seems now to have died out. Pandit Manphul states that the modern family of Mirs is not connected with the old Princes of Badakhshan.

*Zi'l-karnain*, "the Two Horned," is an Arabic epithet of Alexander, with which legends have been connected, but which probably arose from the horned portraits on his coins. The term appears in Chaucer (*Troil. and Cress.* III. 931) in the sense of *non plus* :—

"I am, till God me better minde send,  
At *dulearnou*, right at my wittes end."

And it is said to have still colloquial existence in that sense in some corners of England. This use is said to have arisen from the Arabic application of the term (*Bicorne*) to the 47th Proposition of Euclid. (*Baber*, 13, *N. et E.* XIV. 490; *N. An. des.* V. xxvi. 296; *Burnès*, III. 186 *seqq.*; *Wood*, 241, 371; *J. A. S. B.* XXII. 300; *Ayccn Akbery*, II. 185;—see *N. and Q.* 1st S. vol. V.)

NOTE 2.—I have adopted in the text for the name of the country that one of the several forms in the G. Text which comes nearest to the correct name, viz. *Badascian*. But *Balacian* also appears both in that and in Pauthier's text. This represents *Balakhshán*, a form also sometimes used in the East. Hayton has *Balaxcen*, Clavijo *Balaxia*, the Catalan Map *Baldassia*. From the form *Balakhsh* the Balas Ruby got its name. As Ibn Batuta says: "The Mountains of Badakhshan have given their name to the Badakhshi Ruby, vulgarly called *Al Balakhsh*." Albertus Magnus says the *Balagius* is the female of the Carbuncle or Ruby Proper, "and some say it is his house, and hath thereby got the name, quasi *Palatium Carbunculi*!" The Balais or Balas Ruby is, like the Spinel, a kind inferior to the real Ruby of Ava. The author of the *Masálak al Absár* says the finest Balas ever seen in the Arab countries was one presented to Malek 'Adil Ketboga, at Damascus; it was of a triangular form and weighed 50 drachms. The prices of *Balasci* in Europe in that age may be found in Pegolotti, but the needful problems are hard to solve.

"No sapphire in Inde, no Rubie rich of price,  
There lacked than, nor Emeraud so grene,  
*Balts*, Turkès, ne thing to my device."

—Chaucer, *Court of Love*.

Some account of the Balakhsh from Oriental sources will be found in *J. As.* 5th ser. tom. xi. 109.

(*J. B.* III. 59, 394; *Alb. Mag. de Mineralibus; Pegol.* p. 307; *N. et E.* XIII. i. 246.)

The account of the royal monopoly in working the mines, &c., has continued accurate down to our own day. When Murad Beg of Kunduz conquered Badakhshan some 40 years ago, in disgust at the small produce of the mines he abandoned working them, and sold nearly all the population of the place into slavery! They continue still unworked, unless clandestinely. The reigning Mir, in 1866, had one of them opened at the request of Pandit Manphul, but without much result.

The locality of the mines is on the right bank of the Oxus, in the district of Ish Kásham, and on the borders of SHUGHNAN, the *Syghinan* of the Text. (*P. Manph.*; *Wood.* 315-16, 378; *N. Ann. des V.* xxvi. 300.)

NOTE 3.—The mines of *Lájuurd* (whence *Pázur* and *Lazuli*) have been, like the Ruby-mines, celebrated for ages. They lie in the Upper Valley of the Kokcha, within the Tract called *Yamgán*, of which the popular etymology is *Hamah Kán*, or "All-Mines," and were visited by Wood in 1838. The produce now is said to be of very inferior quality, and in quantity from 30 to 60 *poods* (36 lbs. each) annually. The best quality sells at Bokhara at 30 to 60 tillas, or 12*l.* to 24*l.* the pood (*Manphúl*). Surely it is ominous when a British agent writing of Badakhshan products, finds it natural to express weights in Russian poods!

The *Yamgán* Tract also contains mines of iron, lead, alum, sal-ammoniac, sulphur, ochre, and copper. The last are not worked. But I do not learn of any silver mines nearer than those of Paryán in the Valley of Panjshir, south of the crest of the Hindu-Kush. (See *Cathay*, p. 595.)

NOTE 4.—The huskless barley of the text is thus mentioned by Burnes in the vicinity of the Hindu-Kush: "They rear a barley in this elevated country which has no husk, and grows like wheat; but it is barley." It is not properly *huskless*, but when ripe it bursts the husk and remains so loosely attached as to be dislodged from it by a slight shake. It is grown abundantly in Ladak and the adjoining Hill States. Moorcroft details six varieties of it cultivated there. The kind mentioned by Marco and Burnes is probably that named by Royle *Hordeum Agiceras*, and which has been sent to England under the name of Tartarian Wheat, though it is a genuine barley. *Naked barley* is mentioned by Galen as grown in Cappadocia; and Matthioli speaks of it as grown in France in his day (middle of 16th century). It is also known to the Arabs, for they have a name for it, *Sult.* (*Burnes*, III. 205; *Moorc.* II. 148 *seqq.*; *Galen, de Aliment. Facult.* Lat. ed. 13; *Matthioli*, Ven. 1585, p. 420; *Eng. Cyc. Art. Hordeum*.)

Sesamé is mentioned by P. Manphul as one of the products of Badakhshan; linseed is another, which is also used for oil. Walnut-trees abound, but neither he nor Wood mention the oil. We know that walnut oil is largely manufactured in Kashmir. (*Moorcroft*, II. 148.)

NOTE 5.—These wild sheep are probably the kind called *Kachkár*, mentioned by Baber, and described by Mr. Blyth in his Monograph of Wild Sheep, under the name of *Ovis Vignei*. It is extensively diffused over all the ramifications of Hindu-Kush, and westward perhaps to the Persian Elburz. "It is gregarious," says Wood, "congregating in herds of *several hundreds*." In a later chapter Polo speaks of a wild sheep apparently different and greater. (See *J. A. S. B.*, X. 858 *seqq.*)

NOTE 6.—This pleasant passage is only in Ramusio, but it would be heresy to doubt its genuine character. Mark's recollection of the delight of convalescence in such a climate seems to lend an unusual enthusiasm and felicity to his description of the scenery. Such a region as he speaks of is probably the cool Plateau of Shewa, of which we are told as extending about 25 miles eastward from near Faizabad, and forming one of the finest pastures in Badakhshan. It contains a large lake called by the frequent name Sar-i-Kul. No European traveller in modern times (unless Mr. Gardner) has been on those glorious Tablelands. Burnes says that at Kunduz both natives and foreigners spoke rapturously of the vales of Badakhshan, its rivulets, romantic scenes and glens, its fruits, flowers, and nightingales. Wood is reticent on scenery, naturally, since nearly all his journey was made in winter. When approaching Faizabad on his return from the Upper Oxus however, he says: "On entering the beautiful lawn at the gorge of its valley, I was enchanted at the quiet loveliness of the scene. Up to this time, from the day we left Talikan, we had been moving in snow; but now it had nearly vanished from the valley, and the fine sward was enameled with crocuses, daffodils, and snowdrops." (*P. Manbul*; *Burnes*, III. 176; *Wood*, 383.)

NOTE 7.—Yet scarcely any country in the world has suffered so terribly and repeatedly from invasion. "Enduring decay probably commenced with the wars of Chinghiz, for many an instance in Eastern History shows the permanent effect of such devastations. And here wave after wave of war passed over a little country, isolated on three sides by wild mountains and barbarous tribes, destroying the apparatus of culture which represented the accumulated labour of generations, and the springs of recovery. Century after century saw only progress in decay. Even to our own time the progress of depopulation and deterioration has continued. About 1760, two of the Khwajas of Kashgar, escaping from the dominant Chinese, took refuge in Badakhshan, and were treacherously slain by Sultan Shah, who then ruled the country. The holy men are said in their dying moments to have invoked curses on Badakhshan, and prayed that it might be three times depopulated. And, in fact, since then it has been at least three times ravaged; first, a few years after the outrage, by Ahmed Shah Durani of Kábul, when the treacherous Sultan Shah was put to death; in the beginning of this century by Kokan Beg of Kunduz; and again, in 1829, by his successor

Murad Beg, who swept away the bulk of the remaining inhabitants, and set them down to die in the marshy plains of Kunduz." (*Cathay*, p. 542.)

NOTE 8.—This "bombasticall dissimulation of their garments," as the author of *Anthropometamorphosis* calls such a fashion, is no longer affected by the ladies of Badakhshan. But a friend in the Panjab observes that it still survives *there*. "There are ladies' trowsers here which might almost justify Marco's very liberal estimate of the quantity of stuff required to make them."

## CHAPTER XXX

### OF THE PROVINCE OF PASHAI.

You must know that ten days' journey to the south of Badashan there is a Province called PASHAI, the people of which have a peculiar language, and are Idolaters, of a brown complexion. They are great adepts in sorceries and the diabolic arts. The men wear earrings and brooches of gold and silver set with stones and pearls. They are a pestilent people and a crafty : and they live upon flesh and rice. Their country is very hot.<sup>1</sup>

Now let us proceed and speak of another country which is seven days' journey from this one towards the south-east, and the name of which is KESHIMUR.

NOTE 1.—The name of PASHAI has already occurred (see chap. xviii.) linked with DIR, as indicating a tract, apparently of very rugged and difficult character, through which the partizan leader Nigúdar passed in making an incursion from Badakhshan towards Kashmir. The difficulty here lies in the name *Pashai*, which points to the south-west, whilst *Dir* and all other indications point to the south-east. But *Pashai* seems to me clearly the reading to which all texts tend, whilst it is clearly expressed in the G. T. (*Pasciai*), and it is contrary to all my experience of the interpretation of Marco Polo to attempt to torture the name in the way which has been common with commentators professed and occasional. But dropping this name for a moment, let us see to what the other indications do point.



In the meagre statements of this and the next chapter, interposed as they are among chapters of detail unusually ample for Polo, there is nothing to lead us to suppose that the Traveller ever personally visited the countries of which these two chapters treat. I believe we have here merely an amplification of the information already sketched of the country penetrated by the Nigudarian bands whose escapade is related in Chapter xviii., information which was probably derived from a Mongol source. And these countries are in my belief *both* regions famous in the legends of the Northern Buddhists, viz. UDYANA and KASHMIR.

Udyana lay to the north of Peshawar on the Swat River, but from the extent assigned to it by Hwen Thsang, the name probably covered the whole hill-region south of the Hindu Kush and the Dard country, from Chitral to the Indus, as indeed it is represented in the Map of Vivien St. Martin (*Pèlerins Bouddhistes*, II.). It is regarded by Fabian as the most northerly Province of India, and in his time the food and clothing of the people were similar to those of Gangetic India. It was the native country of Padma Sambhava, one of the chief apostles of Lamaism, i.e. of Tibetan Buddhism, and a great master of enchantments. The doctrines of Sakya, as they prevailed in Udyana in old times, were probably strongly tinged with Sivaitic magic, and the Tibetans still regard that locality as the classic ground of sorcery and witchcraft.

Hwen Thsang says of the inhabitants: "The men are of a soft and pusillanimous character, *naturally inclined to craft and trickery*. They are fond of study, but pursue it with no ardour. *The science of magical formulae is become a regular professional business with them*. They generally wear clothes of white cotton, and rarely use any other stuff. Their spoken language, in spite of some differences, has a strong resemblance to that of India."

These particulars suit well with the slight description in our text, and the Indian atmosphere that it suggests; and the direction and distance ascribed to Pashai suit well with Chitral, which may be taken as representing Udyana when approached from Badakhshan. For it would be quite practicable for a party to reach the town of Chitral in ten days from the position assigned to the old Capital of Badakhshan. And from Chitral the road towards Kashmir would lie over the high passes of the Laspur, or Laspisar range to DIR, which from its mention in Chap. xviii. we must consider an obligatory point. (*Fah-hian*, p. 26; *Koeppen*, I, 70; *Pèlerins Boud.* II. 131-2.)

We must now turn to the name *Pashai*. The Pashai Tribe are now Mahomedan, but are reckoned among the aboriginal inhabitants of the country, which the Afghans are not. Baber mentions them several times, and counts their language as one of the dozen that were spoken at Kabul in his time. Burnes says it resembles that of the Kafirs. A small vocabulary of it was published by Leech, in the 7th volume of the J. A. S. B., and has been repeated, with scarcely any modification,

by Raverty in vol. xxxiii., alongside of a vocabulary of the Siah-posh Kafir language. Both seem to be Indo-Germanic, but not *very* close to one another.

Ibn Batuta, after crossing the Hindu Kush by one of the passes at the head of the Panjshir Valley, reaches the Mountain BASHAI (Pashai). And it is still in the neighbourhood of Panjshir that the tribe is most numerous, though they have other settlements in the hill-country about Nijrao, and on the left bank of the Kabul River between Kabul and Jalálabad. *Pasha* and *Pasha-gar* is also named as one of the chief divisions of the Kafirs, and it seems a fair conjecture that it represents those of the Pashais who resisted or escaped conversion to Islam. (See *Leech's Reports* in Collection pub. at Calcutta in 1839; *Baber*, 140; *Elphinstone*, I. 411; *J. A. S. B.* VII. 329, 731, XXVIII. 317, 1899, XXXIII. 271-2; *J. B.* III. 86.)

My first impression was that the route indicated by Polo lay by the Panjshir passes, and the Pashai districts in that quarter; but I am satisfied that this is irreconcilable with the other data. The difficulty therefore remains as to how he came to apply the name *Pashai* to the country south-east of Badakhshan. I cannot tell. But it is at least possible that the Pashai tribe (of which the branches even now are spread over a considerable extent of country) may have been once more important, and that their name may have had a wide application over the southern spurs of the Hindu Kush. In the *Tabakat-i-Nasri* (*Elliot*, II. 317) we find mention of the Highlands of *Pasha-Afroz*, but nothing to define their position. Our Author is speaking here, as we consider, from hearsay, and hearsay geography without maps is much given to generalizing. I apprehend that, along with characteristics specially referable to the Tibetan and Mongol traditions of Udyána, the term Pashai as Polo uses it vaguely covers the whole tract from the southern boundary of Badakhshan to the Indus and the Kabul River.

But even by extending its limits to Attok, we shall not get within seven marches of Kashmir. It is 234 miles by road from Attok to Srinagar; greatly more than seven marches in such a country. And, according to Polo's usual system, the marches should be counted from Chitral or some point thereabouts.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

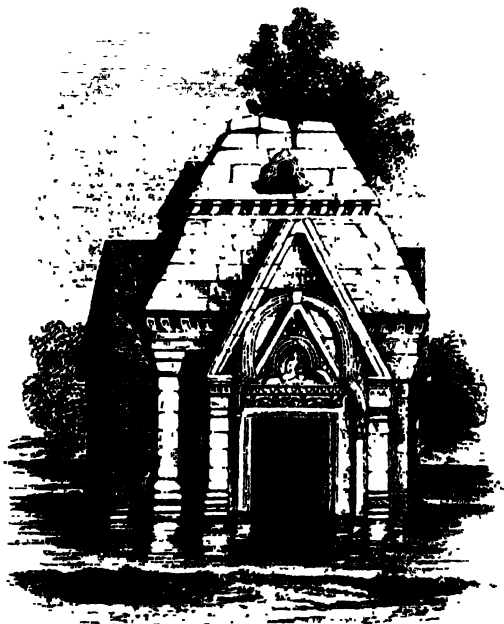
### OF THE PROVINCE OF KESHIMUR.

KESHIMUR also is a Province inhabited by a people who are Idolaters and have a language of their own.<sup>1</sup> They have an astonishing acquaintance with the devilries of

enchantment; insomuch that they make their idols to speak. They can also by their sorceries bring on changes of weather and produce darkness, and do a number of things so extraordinary that no one without seeing them would believe them.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, this country is the very original source from which Idolatry has spread abroad.<sup>3</sup>

In this direction you can proceed further till you come to the Sea of India.

The men are brown and lean, but the women, taking them as brunettes, are very beautiful. The food of the



Ancient Buddhist Temple at Pandrethan in Kashmir.

people is flesh, and milk, and rice. The clime is finely tempered, being neither very hot nor very cold. There are numbers of towns and villages in the country, but also forests and desert tracts, and strong passes, so that the people have no fear of anybody, and keep their independence, with a king of their own to rule and do justice.<sup>4</sup>

There are in this country Eremites (after the fashion of those parts), who dwell in seclusion and practise great

abstinence in eating and drinking. They observe strict chastity, and keep from all sins forbidden in their law, so that they are regarded by their own folk as very holy persons. They live to a very great age.<sup>5</sup>

There are also a number of idolatrous abbeys and monasteries. [The people of the province do not kill animals nor spill blood; so if they want to eat meat they get the Saracens who dwell among them to play the butcher.<sup>6</sup>] The coral which is carried from our parts of the world has a better sale there than in any other country.<sup>7</sup>

Now we will quit this country, and not go any further in the same direction: for if we did so we should enter India; and that I do not wish to do at present. For on our return journey I mean to tell you about India, all in regular order. Let us go back therefore to Badashan, for we cannot otherwise proceed on our journey.

NOTE 1.—I apprehend that in this chapter Marco represents Buddhism (which is to be understood by his expression *Idolatry*, not always, but usually) as in a position of greater life and prosperity than we can believe it to have enjoyed in Kashmir at the end of the 13th century, and I suppose that his knowledge of it was derived in great part from tales of the Mongol and Tibetan Buddhists about its past glories.

I know not if the spelling *Keshimur* represents any peculiar Mongol pronunciation of the name. Plano Carpini, probably the first modern European to mention this celebrated region, calls it *Casmir* (p. 708).

"The Cashmeerians," says Abul Fazl, "have a language of their own, but their books are written in the Shanskrit tongue, although the character is sometimes Cashmeerian. They write chiefly upon *Tooz* [birch-bark], which is the bark of a tree; it easily divides into leaves, and remains perfect for many years" (*Ayecn Akbery*, II. 147). A sketch of Kashmiri Grammar by Mr. Edgeworth will be found in Vol. X. of the *J. A. S. B.*, and a fuller one by Major Leech in Vol. XIII. The latter says the language is without doubt of Sanscrit origin.

NOTE 2.—The Kashmirian conjurors had made a great impression on Marco, who had seen them at the Court of the Great Khan, and he recurs in a later chapter to their weather-sorceries and other enchantments, when we shall make some remarks. Meanwhile let us cite a passage from Bernier, already quoted by M. Pauthier. When crossing

the Pir Panjál (the mountain crossed on entering Kashmir from Lahore) with the camp of Aurangzib, he met with "an old Hermit who had dwelt upon the summit of the Pass since the days of Jehangir, and whose religion nobody knew, although it was said that he could work miracles, and used at his pleasure to produce extraordinary thunderstorms, as well as hail, snow, rain, and wind. There was something wild in his countenance, and in his long spreading and tangled hoary beard. He asked alms fiercely, allowing the travellers to drink from earthen cups that he had set out upon a great stone, but signing to them to go quickly by without stopping. He scolded those who made a noise, 'for,' said he to me (after I had entered his cave and smoothed him down with a half rupee which I put in his hand with all humility), 'noise here raises furious storms. Aurangzib has done well in taking my advice and prohibiting it. Shah Jahan always did the like. But Jahangir once chose to laugh at what I said, and made his drums and trumpets sound; the consequence was he nearly lost his life.' " (*Bernier*, Amst. ed. 1699, II. 290.) A successor of this hermit was found in the same spot by P. Desideri in 1713, and another by Vigne in 1837.

NOTE 3.—Though the earliest entrance of Buddhism into Tibet was from India Proper, yet Kashmir twice in the history of Tibetan Buddhism played a most important part. It was in Kashmir that was gathered under the patronage of the great King Kanishka, in the century before our era, the Fourth Buddhistic Council, which marks the point of separation between Northern and Southern Buddhism. Numerous missionaries went forth from Kashmir to spread the doctrine in Tibet and in Central Asia. Many of the Pandits who laboured at the translation of the sacred books into Tibetan were Kashmiris, and it was even in Kashmir that several of the translations were made. But these were not the only circumstances that made Kashmir a holy land to the Northern Buddhists. In the end of the ninth century the religion was extirpated in Tibet by the Julian of the Lamas, the great persecutor Langdarma, and when it was restored, a century later, it was from Kashmir in particular that fresh missionaries were procured to reinstruct the people in the forgotten Law. (See *Koeppen*, II. 12-13, 78; *J. As.*, ser. 6, tom. vi. 540.)

"The spread of Buddhism to Kashmir is an event of extraordinary importance in the history of that religion. Thenceforward that country became a mistress in the Buddhist Doctrine and the head-quarters of a particular school. . . . The influence of Kashmir was very marked, especially in the spread of Buddhism beyond India. From Kashmir it penetrated to Kandahar and Kabul . . . and thence over Bactria. . . . Tibetan Buddhism also had its essential origin from Kashmir . . . so great is the importance of this region in the History of Buddhism." (*Vassilyev*, *Der Buddhismus*, I. 44.)

It is thus very intelligible how Marco learned from the Mongols and

the Lamas with whom he came in contact to regard Kashmir as "the very original source from which their Religion had spread abroad." The feeling with which they looked to Kashmir must have been nearly the same as that with which the Buddhists of Burma look to Ceylon. But this feeling towards Kashmir does not *now*, I am informed, exist in Tibet. The reverence for the holy places has reverted to Bahar and the neighbouring "cradle-lands" of Buddhism.

NOTE 4.—The people of Kashmir retain their beauty, but they are morally one of the most degraded races in Asia. Long oppression, now under the Lords of Jamu as great as ever, has no doubt aggravated this. Yet it would seem that twelve hundred years ago the evil elements were there as well as the beauty. The Chinese traveller says: "Their manners are light and volatile, their characters effeminate and pusillanimous. . . . They are very handsome, but their natural bent is to fraud and trickery" (*l'él. Boud.* II. 167-8). Vigne's account is nearly the same (II. 142-3).

NOTE 5.—In the time of Hwen Thsang, who spent two years studying in Kashmir in the first half of the 7th century, though there were many Brahmans in the country, Buddhism was in a flourishing state; there were 100 convents with about 5000 monks. In the end of the 8th century a King (Harshadewa, 1090-1102) is mentioned *exceptionally* as a protector of Buddhism. The supposition has been intimated above that Marco's picture refers to a traditional state of things, but I must notice that a like picture is presented in the Chinese account of Hsü-laku's war. One of the thirty kingdoms subdued by the Mongols was "The kingdom of Fo (Buddha) called *Kishimi*. It lies to the N.W. of India. There are to be seen the men who are counted the successors of Shakia; their ancient and venerable air recalls the countenance of Bodi-dharma as one sees it in pictures. They abstain from wine, and content themselves with a gill of rice for their daily food, and are occupied only in reciting the prayers and litanies of Fo" (*Rém. N. Mel. Asiat.* I. 179). Abül Fazl says that on his third visit with Akbar to Kashmir he discovered some old men of the religion of Buddha, but none of them were *literati*. The *Rishis* of whom he speaks as abstaining from meat and from female society, as charitable and unfettered by traditions, were perhaps a modified remnant of the Buddhist Eremites. (*Vie et V. de H. T.* p. 390; *Lassen*, III. 709; *Ayzen Abb.* II. 147, III. 151.)

We see from the *Dabistan* that in the 17th century Kashmir continued to be a great resort of Magian mystics and sages of various sects, professing great abstinence, and credited with preternatural powers. And indeed Vambéry tells us that even in our own day the Kashmiri Dervishes are pre-eminent among their Mahomedan brethren for cunning, secret arts, skill in exorcisms, &c. (*Dab.* I. 113 *seqq.*, II. 147-8; *Vamb. Sk. of Cent. Asia*, 9.)

NOTE 6.—The first precept of the Buddhist Decalogue, or Tén Ohm VOL. I.

gations of the Religious Body, is not to take life. But *animal food* is not forbidden, though restricted. Indeed it is one of the circumstances in the *Legendary History of Sakya Muni*, which looks as if it *must* be true, that he is related to have aggravated his fatal illness by eating a dish of pork set before him by a hospitable goldsmith. Giorgi says the butchers in Tibet are looked on as infamous; and people selling sheep or the like will make a show of exacting an assurance that these are not to be slaughtered. In Burma when a British party wanted beef the owner of the bullocks would decline to make one over, but would point one out that might be shot by the foreigners.

In Tibetan history it is told of the persecutor Lang-darma that he compelled members of the highest orders of the clergy to become hunters and butchers. A Chinese collection of epigrams, dating from the 9th century, gives a facetious List of *Incongruous Conditions*, among which we find a poor Parsi, a sick Physician, a fat Bride, a Teacher who does not know his letters, and a *Butcher who reads the Scriptures* (of Buddhism)! (*Alph. Tib.* 445; *Koeppen*, I. 74; *N. and Q.*, C. and J. III. 34.)

NOTE 7.--Coral is still a very popular adornment in the Himalayan countries. The Merchant Tavernier says the people to the north of the Great Mogul's territories, and in the mountains of Assam and Tibet were the greatest purchasers of coral. (*Tr. in India*, Bk. II. ch. xxiii.)

## CHAPTER XXXII.

### OF THE GREAT RIVER OF BADASHAN.

IN leaving Badashan you ride twelve days between east and north-east, ascending a river that runs through land belonging to a brother of the Prince of Badashan, and containing a good many towns and villages and scattered habitations. The people are Mahometāns, and valiant in war. At the end of those twelve days you come to a province of no great size, extending indeed no more than three days' journey in any direction, and this is called VOKHAN. The people worship Mahommet, and they have a peculiar language. They are gallant soldiers, and they have a chief whom they call NONE, which is as much as to say *Count*, and they are liegemen to the Prince of Badashan.'

There are numbers of wild beasts of all sorts in this region. And when you leave this little country, and ride three days north-east, always among mountains, you get to such a height that 'tis said to be the highest place in the world! And when you have got to this height you find [a great lake between two mountains, and out of it] a fine river running through a plain clothed with the finest pasture in the world; insomuch that a lean beast there will fatten to your heart's content in ten days. There are great numbers of all kinds of wild beasts; among others, wild sheep of great size, whose horns are good six palms in length. From these horns the shepherds make great bowls to eat from, and they use the horns also to enclose folds for their cattle at night. [Messer Marco was told also that the wolves were numerous, and killed many of those wild sheep. Hence quantities of their horns and bones were found, and these were made into great heaps by the way-side, in order to guide travellers when snow was on the ground.]

The Plain is called PAMIER, and you ride across it for twelve days together, finding nothing but a desert without habitations or any green thing, so that travellers are obliged to carry with them whatever they have need of. The region is so lofty and cold that you do not even see any birds flying. And I must notice also that because of this great cold, fire does not burn so brightly, nor give out so much heat as usual, nor does it cook food so effectually.<sup>a</sup>

Now, if we go on with our journey towards the east-north-east, we travel a good forty days, continually passing over mountains and hills, or through valleys, and crossing many rivers and tracts of wilderness. And in all this way you find neither habitation of man, nor any green thing, but must carry with you whatever you require. The country is called BOLOR. The people dwell high up in the mountains, and are savage idolaters, living only by the chase, and clothing themselves in the skins of beasts. They are in truth an evil race.<sup>b</sup>



NOTE 1.—The river along which Marco travels from Badakhshan is no doubt the upper stream of the Oxus, known locally as the Panja, along which Wood also travelled. It is true that the river is reached from Badakhshan Proper by ascending another river (the Vardoj) and crossing the Pass of Ishkashm (10,000 ft.), but in the brief style of our narrative we must expect such condensation.

WAKHAN was restored to geography by Macartney, in the able map which he compiled for Elphinstone's *Caubul*, and it has been made known more accurately by Wood's journey through it. It embraces the Panja valley above Ishkashm and some tributary *Dardhs* or Vales. Wood estimated the total population of the province at only 1000 souls, though it might be capable of supporting 5000. He saw it, however, in the depth of winter. As to the peculiar language see note 1, ch. xxix.

We appear to see in the indications of this paragraph precisely the same system of government that now prevails in the Oxus valleys. The central districts of Faizabad and Jerm were, before the late Afghan conquest, under the immediate administration of Mir Jahándár Sháh, the Prince of Badakhshan, whilst fifteen other districts, such as *Kishm*, *Rusták*, *Shighnán*, *Ishkashm*, *Wakhán*, were dependencies "held by the relations of the Mir, or hereditary rulers, on a feudal tenure, conditional on fidelity and military service in time of need, the holders possessing supreme authority in their respective territories, and paying little or no tribute to the paramount power." (*Pandit Manphul*.) The first part of the valley of which Marco speaks as belonging to a brother of the Prince may correspond to Ishkashm; the second, Wakhan, seems to have had a hereditary ruler; but both were vassals of the Prince of Badakhshan, and therefore are styled *Counts*, not kings or *Seigneurs*.

The native title which Marco gives as the equivalent of Count is remarkable. *Non* or *None*, as it is variously written in the texts, would in French form represent *Nono* in Italian. Pauthier refers this title to the "*Rao-nana* (or *nano*) *Rao*," which figures as the style of Kanerkes in the Indo-Scythic coinage. But Wilson (*Ariana Antiqua*, p. 358) interprets *Raonano* as most probably a genitive plural of *Rao*, whilst the whole inscription answers precisely to the Greek one ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΚΑΝΗΡΚΟΥ which is found on other coins of the same prince. Gen. Cunningham, a very competent authority, adheres to this view and writes: "I do not think *None* or *Non* can have any connection with the *Nana* of the coins."

We find in the published Timur's Institutes (p. 329) "the Beglerbegs, the Amirs, and the *Nunídn*." If the last word were a genuine term we might be satisfied to regard it as the plural of Polo's *None*. But it is probably an error for *Núldán*, *Núin* or *Noydn* being a prince of the blood in Mongol.

It is remarkable, however, that *NONO* (said to signify "younger," or lesser) is in Tibet the title given to a younger brother, deputy, or subordinate prince. In Cunningham's *Ladak* (259), we read: "*No-no* is

the usual term of respect which is used in addressing any young man of the higher ranks, and when prefixed to *Kahlon* it means the younger or deputy minister. Moorcroft (I. p. 334-5) gives the term without the title, as the usual designation of the deputy minister, just as we should say 'the deputy,' instead of 'the deputy chairman.' And again (p. 352): "*No-no* is the title given to a younger brother. Nono Sunnam was the younger brother of Chang Raphtan the Kahlon of Bazgo." There is a slight error in the reference to Moorcroft; for though the latter speaks of the *Nuna-Khalun*, I cannot find that he uses *Nuna* simply (see I. 248, 253, 334). But I have recently encountered the word used independently, and precisely in Marco's application of it. An old friend in speaking of a journey that he had made in our Tibetan provinces, said incidentally that he had accompanied the commissioner to the installation of a new NONO (I think in Spiti). The term here corresponds so precisely with the explanation, which Marco gives of *None* as a Count subject to a superior sovereign, that it is difficult to regard the coincidence as accidental. The *Yuechi* or Indo-Scythians who long ruled the Oxus countries are said to have been of Tibetan origin. Can this title have been a trace of their rule? Or is it rather Indian? for Gen. Cunningham writes to me that he regards the word as "the same as the Hindi *Namū*" (qu. *Namhi* of J. Shakespear, "small, diminutive"?).

NOTE 2.—This chapter is one of the most interesting in the book, and contains one of its most splendid anticipations of modern exploration, whilst conversely Captain John Wood's narrative presents the most brilliant confirmation in detail of Marco's narrative.

We have very old testimony to the recognition of the great altitude of the Plateau of PAMER (the name which Marco gives it and which it still retains), and to the existence of the lake upon its surface. The Chinese pilgrims Hwui Seng and Sung Yun, who passed this way, A.D. 518, inform us that these high lands of the Tsung Ling were commonly said to be midway between heaven and earth. The more celebrated Hwen Thsang, who came this way nearly 120 years later (about 644) on his return to China, "after crossing the mountains for 700 *li*, arrived at the valley of *Pomilo* (Pamer). This valley is 1000 *li* (about 200 miles) from east to west, and 100 *li* (20 m.) from north to south, and lies between two snowy ranges in the centre of the Tsung Ling mountains. The traveller is annoyed by sudden gusts of wind, and the snow-drifts never cease, spring or summer. As the soil is almost constantly frozen, you see but a few miserable plants, and no crops can live. The whole tract is but a dreary waste, without a trace of human kind. In the middle of the valley is a great lake 300 *li* (60 m.) from east to west, and 500 *li* from north to south. This stands in the centre of Jambudwipa (the Buddhist *okoumēn*) on a plateau of prodigious elevation. An endless variety of creatures peoples its waters. When you hear the murmur and clash of its waves you think you are listening to the noisy hum of a

great market in which vast crowds of people are mingling in excitement. . . . The lake discharges to the west, and a river runs out of it in that direction and joins the *Potsu* (Oxus). . . . The lake likewise discharges to the east, and a great river runs out, which flows eastward to the western frontier of *Kiesha* (Káshgar) where it joins the river *Sita*, and runs eastward with it into the sea." The story of an eastern outflow from the lake is no doubt legend, connected with an ancient Hindu belief (see *Cathay*, p. 347), but Burnes in modern times heard much the same story.

"After quitting the (frozen) surface of the river," says Wood, "we . . . ascended a low hill which apparently bounded the valley to the eastward. On surmounting this, at 3 P.M. of the 19th February, 1838, we stood, to use a native expression, upon the *Bám-i-Duniáh* or 'Roof of the World,' while before us lay stretched a noble, but frozen sheet of water, from whose western end issued, the infant river of the Oxus. This fine lake (*Sirikul*) lies in the form of a crescent, about 14 miles long from east to west, by an average breadth of one mile. On three sides it is bordered by swelling hills about 500 feet high, while along its southern bank they rise into mountains 3500 feet above the lake, or 19,000 feet above the sea, and covered with perpetual snow, from which never-failing source the lake is supplied. . . . Its elevation, measured by the temperature of boiling water, is 15,600 feet."

The absence of birds, noticed by Marco, probably shows that he passed very late or early in the season. Hwen Thsang, we see, gives a different account; Wood was there in winter, but heard that in summer the lake swarmed with water-fowl.

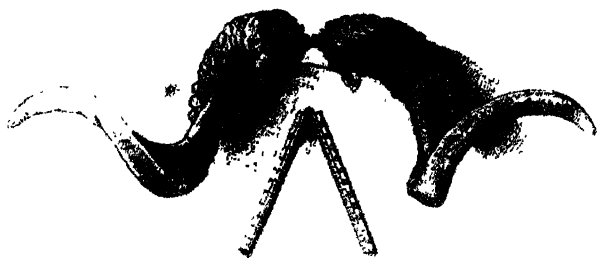
The Pamer Steppe was crossed by Benedict Goës late in the autumn of 1603, and the narrative speaks of the great cold and desolation, and the difficulty of breathing. We have also an abstract of the journey of Abdul Mejid, a British agent, who passed Pamer on his way to Kokan in 1861:—"Fourteen weary days were occupied in crossing the steppe; the marches were long, depending on uncertain supplies of grass and water, which sometimes wholly failed them; food for man and beast had to be carried with the party, for not a trace of human habitation is to be met with in those inhospitable wilds. . . . The steppe is interspersed with tamarisk jungle and the wild willow, and in the summer with tracts of high grass." (*Neumann, Pilgerfahrten Buddh. Priester*, p. 50; *V. et V. de H. T.* 271-2; *Wood*, 354; *Proc. R. G. S.*, X. 150).

We may observe that Severtsof asserts *Pamer* to be a generic term, applied to all high plateaux in the Thian Shan.

Wood speaks of the numerous wolves in this region. And the great sheep is that to which Blyth, in honour of our traveller, has given the name of *Ovis Poli*. A pair of horns, sent by Wood to the Royal Asiatic Society, and of which a representation is given below, affords the following dimensions:—Length of one horn on the curve, 4 feet 8 inches; round the base 14½ inches; distance of tips apart 3 feet 9 inches. This sheep

appears to be the same as the *Rass*, of which Burnes heard that the horns were so big that a man could not lift a pair, and that foxes bred in them; also that the carcase formed a load for two horses. Wood says that these horns supply shoes for the Kirghiz horses, and also a good substitute for stirrup-irons. "We saw numbers of horns strewed about in every direction, the spoils of the Kirghiz hunter. Some of these were of an astonishingly large size, and belonged to an animal of a species between a goat and a sheep, inhabiting the steppes of Pamir. *The ends of the horns projecting above the snow often indicated the direction of the road*; and wherever they were heaped in large quantities and disposed in a semicircle, there our escort recognized the site of a Kirghiz summer encampment. . . . We came in sight of a rough-looking building, decked out with the horns of the wild sheep, and all but buried amongst the snow. It was a Kirghiz burying-ground." (pp. 340, 350, 353.)

In 1867 this great sheep was shot by M. Severtsof on the Plateau of Aksai in the western Thianshan. He reports these animals to go in great herds, and to be very difficult to kill. However he brought back



two specimens. The Nam River is stated to be the northern limit of the species. Severtsof also states that the enemies of the *Ovis Poli* are the wolves.

As to the pasture, Timkowski heard that "the pasturage of Pamir is so luxuriant and nutritious, that if horses are left on it for more than forty days they die of repletion" (I. 421). And Wood: "The grass of Pamer, they tell you, is so rich that a sorry horse is here brought into good condition in less than twenty days; and its nourishing qualities are evidenced in the productiveness of their ewes, which almost invariably bring forth two lambs at a birth" (p. 365).

With regard to the effect upon fire ascribed to the "great cold," Ramusio's version inserts the expression "*gli fu af' amato per miracolo*," "it was asserted to him as a wonderful circumstance." And Humboldt thinks it so strange that Marco should not have observed this personally that he doubts whether Polo himself passed the Pamer. "How is it that he does not say that he himself had seen how the flames disperse and leap about, as I myself have so often experienced at similar altitudes in

the "boiling-point of water?" (*Cent. Asia, Germ. Travel, I. 588*). But the words quoted from Pallas do not exist in the old texts, and they are probably an editorial interpolation indicating disbelief in the statement.

Major Montgomerie, R.E., of the Indian Survey, who has probably passed more time nearer the heavens than any man living, sends me the following note on this passage: "What Marco Polo says as to fire at great altitudes not cooking so effectually as usual is perfectly correct as far as anything *boiled* is concerned, but I doubt if it is as to anything *roasted*. The want of brightness in a fire at great altitudes is I think altogether attributable to the poorness of the fuel, which consists of either small sticks or bits of roots, or of *argols* of dung, all of which give out a good deal of smoke, more especially the latter if not quite dry; but I have often seen a capital blaze made with the argols when perfectly dry. As to cooking, we found that rice, *dal*, and potatoes would never soften properly, no matter how long they were boiled. This of course was due to the boiling-point being only from 170° to 180°. Our tea, moreover, suffered from the same cause, and was never good when we were over 15,000 feet. This was very marked. Some of my natives made dreadful complaints about the rice and *dal* that they got from the village-heads in the valleys and vowed that they only gave them what was very old and hard, as they could not soften it!"

NOTE 3.—According to Gen. Cunningham the Tibetan kingdom of Balti is called *Balor* by the Dards of Gilgit, and the same high authority considers Balti to be the *Poluto* or Bolor of Hwen Tsaang, and the Bolor of Polo. I cannot concur as to the latter, though very possibly (as indeed Gen. Cunningham seems to intimate) the term Bolor had at one time an extension which included both Balti and the mountains adjoining Pamir. Some corroboration of this supposed wide extension of the term is found in the account which the *Tibetan Rashid*, a work written in Eastern Turkestan in the 16th century, gives of *Malaur* (Balaur or Bolor): "It is a country with few level spots. It has a circuit of four months' march. The eastern frontier borders on Kashgar and Yarkand; it has Badakhshan to the north, Kabul to the west, and Kashmir to the south." Also in a Pushtu poem of the 17th century, translated by Raverty, we find the mountains of *Bharaistan* assigned as the northern boundary of Swat. But there can, I think, be no reasonable doubt of the existence of a *place* and small mountain state called Bolor (perhaps a relic of the extension just alluded to) immediately west of Pamir. This, according to V. St. Martin, is the *Poluto* of Hwen Tsaang; it appears as a geographical position in the *Tables of Nations*, and reappears in the Chinese tables of last century with precisely the same latitude. These last I fancy form the chief authority for the position assigned in our modern maps to a place called Bolor, which the geographer, George Ludwig Von . . . claims to have visited. The name of Bolor is described in the great Chinese geography of . . .





Klaproth has given extracts, as situated to the south-west of Yarkand and east of Badakhshan, and is containing, when it submitted to the Chinese in 1740, 30,000 families. This of course could not be Balti. Another Chinese extract speaks of the *Foolurh* (Bolor?) people as a race of Mahomedans west of Yarkand, who live in a very uncivilized state without books or writing, not understanding the language of other Mahomedans, and dwelling pell-mell, men and women, like herds of cattle. This probably refers to the Kirghiz.

The *J. A. S. Bengal*, for 1853 (Vol. XXII.), contains extracts from the diary of a Mr. Gardner in those central regions of Asia. These read more like the memoranda of a dyspeptic dream than anything else, and the only passage I can find illustrative of our traveller is the following; the region alluded to must be in or near the Bolor country, for it is described as lying twenty days south-west of Kashgar: "The Akaas are short, stout, and hardy; but few Mahomedans; except the tribe Oojuem near Andejan; women not handsome; dress, skins. The Keiaz tribe live in caves on the highest peaks, subsist by hunting, keep no flocks, said to be anthropophagous, but have handsome women; eat their flesh raw" (p. 295; *Pèlerin's Bond*. III. 316, 421, &c.; *Ladak*, 34, 45, 47; *Mag. Asiatique*, I. 92, 96 7; *Not. et Est.* II. 475, XIV. 492; *J. A. S. B.* XXXI. 279; *Chin. Repos.* IX. 129).

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### OF THE KINGDOM OF CASCAR.

CASCAR is a region lying between north-east and east, and constituted a kingdom in former days, but now it is subject to the Great Kaan. The people worship Mahommet. There are a good number of towns and villages, but the greatest and finest is Cascar itself. The inhabitants live by trade and handicrafts; they have beautiful gardens and vineyards, and fine estates, and grow a great deal of cotton. From this country many merchants go forth about the world on trading journeys. The natives are a wretched niggardly set of people; they eat and drink in miserable fashion. There are in the country many Nestorian Christians who have churches of their own. The people of the country have a peculiar language, and the territory extends for five journey<sup>2</sup>



NOTE 1.—It would seem that Polo's party, instead of crossing the Pamer from west to east, and then descending by the rugged country above Yarkand upon that city (as Benedict Goës did), travelled north in the length of the steppe for twelve days, probably following so far the route of Abdul Mejid in our day, and then descended upon KASHGAR.

The name of this city is generally pronounced by the people, as 'Izzat Ullah tells us, *Káshkár*. Goës also spells it *Cascar*.

It is not easy to understand how Kashgar should have been subject to the Great Kaan, except in the sense in which all territories under Mongol rule owed him homage. Yarkand Polo acknowledges to have belonged to Kaidu, and the boundary between Kaidu's territory and the Kaan's lay between Karashahar and Kamul, much further east.

Kashgar was at this time a metropolitan See of the Nestorian Church. (*Cathay*, &c., 275, ccxlv.)

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### OF THE GREAT CITY OF SAMARCAN.

SAMARCAN is a great and noble city towards the north-west, inhabited by both Christians and Saracens, who are subject to the Great Kaan's nephew, CAIDOU by name; he is however, at bitter enmity with the Kaan.<sup>1</sup> I will tell you of a great marvel that happened at this city.

It is not a great while ago that SIGATAY, own brother to the Great Kaan, who was Lord of this country and of many an one besides, became a Christian.<sup>2</sup> The Christians rejoiced greatly at this, and they built a great church in the city, in honour of John the Baptist; and by his name the church was called. And they took a very fine stone which belonged to the Saracens, and placed it as the pedestal of a column in the middle of the Church, supporting the roof. It came to pass, however, that Sigatay died. Now the Saracens were full of rancour about that stone that had been theirs, and which had been set up in the church of the Christians; and when they saw that the Prince was dead, they said one to another that now was the time to get back

Marco evidently never was at Samarkand, though doubtless it was visited by his Father and Uncle on their first journey, when we know they were long at Bokhara. Having therefore little to say descriptive of a city he had not seen, he tells us a story:—

“ So geographers, in Afric maps,  
With savage pictures fill their gaps,  
And o’er unhabitable downs  
Place elephants for want of towns.”

As regards the Christians of Samarkand, who figure in the following story, we may note that the city had been one of the Metropolitan Sees of the Nestorian Church since the beginning of the 8th century, and had been a bishopric perhaps two centuries earlier. Prince Sempad, High Constable of Armenia, in a letter written from Samarkand in 1246 or 1247, mentions several circumstances illustrative of the state of things indicated in this story: “ I tell you that we have found many Christians scattered all over the East, and many fine churches, lofty, ancient, and of good architecture, which have been spoiled by the Turks. Hence, the Christians of this country came to the presence of the reigning Kaan’s grandfather (*i.e.* Chinghiz); he received them most honourably, and granted them liberty of worship, and issued orders to prevent their having any just cause of complaint by word or deed. *And so the Saracens, who used to treat them with contempt, have now the like treatment in double measure.*”

Shortly after Marco’s time, viz. in 1328, Thomas of Mancasola, a Dominican, who had come from Samarkand with a Mission to the Pope (John XXII.) from Ilchigadai Khan of Chagatai, was appointed Latin Bishop of that city. (*Mosheim*, p. 110, &c.; *Cathay*, p. 192.)

NOTE 2.—CHAGATAI, here called Sigatay, was Uncle, not Brother, to the Great Kaan (Kublai). Nor was Kaidu either Chagatai’s son or Kublai’s nephew, as Marco here and elsewhere represents him to be (see Book IV. ch. i.). The term used to describe Chagatai’s relationship is *frère charnel*, which excludes ambiguity, cousinship or the like (such as is expressed by the Italian *fratello cugino*), and corresponds I believe to the *brother german* of Scotch law documents.

NOTE 3.—One might say, these things be an allegory! We take the fine stone that belongs to the Saracens (or Papists) to build our church on, but the day of reckoning comes at last, and our (Protestant) Christians are afraid that the Church will come about their ears. May it stand, and better than that of Samarkand has done!

There is a story somewhat like this in D’Herbelot, about the Karmathian Heretics carrying off the Black Stone from Mecca, and being obliged years after to bring it back across the breadth of Arabia; on which occasion the stone conducted itself in a miraculous manner.

There is a remarkable Stone at Samarkand, the *Kok-Tash* or Green

## CHS. XXXV.-VI. PROVINCES OF YARCAN AND COTAN.

Stone, on which Timur's throne was set. Tradition says it was brought by him from Brusa (180 cubic feet of it!) but tradition may be wrong (see *Vámbéry's Travels*, p. 206).

### CHAPTER XXXV.

#### OF THE PROVINCE OF YARCAN.

YARCAN is a province five days' journey in extent. The people follow the Law of Mahommet, but there are also Nestorian and Jacobite Christians. They are subject to the same Prince that I mentioned, the Great Kaan's nephew. They have plenty of everything [particularly of cotton. The inhabitants are also great craftsmen, but a large proportion of them have swollen legs, and great crops at the throat, which arises from some quality in their drinking-water]. As there is nothing else worth telling we may pass on.<sup>1</sup>

NOTE 1.—Yarkan or Yarken seems to be the general pronunciation of the name to this day, though we write YARKAND.

Mir 'Izzat Ullah in modern days speaks of the prevalence of goitre at Yarkand. And Mr. Shaw informs me that during his recent visit to Yarkand he had numerous applications for iodine as a remedy for that disease. The theory which connects it with the close atmosphere of valleys will not hold at Yarkand. (*J. R. A. S.*, VII. 303.)

### CHAPTER XXXVI.

#### OF A PROVINCE CALLED COTAN.

COTAN is a province lying between north-east and east, and is eight days' journey in length. The people are subject to the Great Kaan, and are all worshippers of Mahommet.<sup>1</sup> There are numerous towns and villages in the country, but

Cotan, the capital, is the most noble of all, and gives its name to the kingdom. Everything is to be had there in plenty, including abundance of cotton [with flax, hemp, wheat, wine, and the like]. The people have vineyards and gardens and estates. They live by commerce and manufactures, and are no soldiers.<sup>2</sup>

NOTE 1.—“*Aourent Mahomet.*” Though this is Marco’s usual formula to define Mahomedans, we can scarcely suppose that he meant it literally. But in other cases it was *very* literally interpreted. Thus in *Baudouin de Sebourg*, the Dame de Pontieu, a passionate lady who renounces her faith before Saladin, says :—

“ ‘ Et je renoie Dieu et le pouvoir qu’il a,  
Et Marie sa Mère qu’on dist que le porta !  
*Mahom voel aourer*, apportez-le-moi cha !’  
\* \* \* \* Li Soudans commanda  
*Qu’on aportast Mahom ; et celle l’aoura.*”—I. p. 72.

And this notion gave rise to the use of *Mawmet* for an idol in general ; whilst from the *Mahommerie* or place of Islamite worship the name of *mummery* came to be applied to idolatrous or unmeaning rituals ; both very unjust etymologies. Thus of mosques in *Richard Cœur de Lion* :—

“ Kyrkes they made of Crystene Lawe,  
And her *Mawmettes* lete downe drawe.”—*Weber*, II. 228.

So Correa calls a golden idol, which was taken by Da Gama in a ship of Calicut, “an image of Mahomed” (372). Don Quixote too, who ought to have known better, cites with admiration the feat of Rinakdo in carrying off, in spite of forty Moors, a golden image of Mahomed.

NOTE 2.—800 *li* (160 miles) east of *Chokiuka* or Yarkand, Hwen Thsang comes to *Kinstanna* (Kustāna) or KHOTAN. “The country chiefly consists of plains covered with stones and sand. The remainder however, is favourable to agriculture and produces everything abundantly. From this country are got woollen carpets, fine felts, well woven taffetas, white and black jade.” Chinese authors of the 10th century speak of the abundant grapes and excellent wine of Khotan.

Ilchi, the modern capital, was visited by Mr. Johnson of the Indian Survey in 1865. The country, after the revolt against the Chinese in 1863, came first under the rule of Habib-ullah, an aged chief calling himself *Khān Bādshah* of Khotan ; and since the defeat and death of that chief about 1867, it has formed a part of the kingdom of Ya’kūb Beg of Kashgar, which now embraces the whole basin of Eastern Turkistan to Karashahr.

Mr. Johnson says : "The chief grains of the country are Indian corn, wheat, barley of two kinds, *bajra*, *jowdr* (two kinds of *holcus*), buckwheat and rice, all of which are superior to the Indian grains, and are of a very fine quality. . . . The country is certainly superior to India, and in every respect equal to Kashmir, over which it has the advantage of being less humid, and consequently better suited to the growth of fruits. *Olives* (?), pears, apples, peaches, apricots, mulberries, grapes, currants, and melons, all exceedingly large in size and of a delicious flavour, are produced in great variety and abundance. . . . Cotton of valuable quality, and raw silk are produced in very large quantities."

Mr. Johnson reports the whole country to be rich in soil, and very much under-peopled. Ilchi the capital has a population of about 40,000, and is a great place for manufactures. The chief articles produced are silks, felts, carpets (both silk and woollen), coarse cotton cloths, and paper from the mulberry fibre. The people are strict Mahomedans and speak a Turki dialect. Both sexes are good-looking, with a slightly Tartar cast of countenance. (*V. et V. de H. T.* 278; *Résumé, H. de la V. de Khotou*, 73-84; *Chin. Répos.* IX. 128; *J. R. G. S.* XXXVII. 6 seqq.)

## CHAPTER XXXVII

### OF THE PROVINCE OF PEIN.

PEIN is a province five days in length, lying between east and north-east. The people are worshippers of Mahomet, and subjects of the Great Kaan. There are a good number of towns and villages, but the most noble is PEIN, the capital of the kingdom.<sup>1</sup> There are rivers in this country, in which quantities of Jasper and Chalcedony are found.<sup>2</sup> The people have plenty of all products, including cotton. They live by manufactures and trade. But they have a custom that I must relate. If the husband of any woman go away upon a journey and remain away for more than 20 days, as soon as that term is past the woman may marry another man, and the husband also may then marry whom he pleases.<sup>3</sup>

I should tell you that all the provinces that I have been

speaking of, from Cascar forward, and those I am going to mention [as far as the city of Lop] belong to GREAT TURKEY.

NOTE 1.—There have been considerable differences of opinion as to where Pein is to be sought.

"In old times," says the *Haft-Iklim*, "travellers used to go from Khotan to Cathay in 14 (?) days, and found towns and villages all along the road, so that there was no need to travel in caravans. In later days the fear of the Kalmaks caused this line to be abandoned, and the circuitous one occupied 100 days." This directer route between Khotan and China appears to have been followed by Fahian on his way to India; by Hwen Thsang on his way back; and by Shah Rukh's ambassadors on their return from China in 1421. The main question as to Polo's route is whether he took this, or the circuitous route alluded to in the extract just quoted. The latter appears to have gone north from Khotan, crossed the Tamingol, and fallen into the road along the base of the Thian Shan, eventually crossing the Desert southward from Kamul.

Marsden is here very vague. Neumann would seem to prefer the southern route by his suggested identification of Charchan with *Chira* east of Khotan, were it not that he had just before identified Pein with *Piján*, some 700 miles to the N.E. of Chira. Such random zigzag geography is of no aid or value. Murray suggested that Pein was the *Bai* of our maps, a town and district of Eastern Turkestan lying about 350 miles nearly due north of Ilchi, near the foot of the Thian Shan. He also identified the Charchan of the following chapter with *Kard-shahr*, and thus assigned to Polo what we have spoken of as the northern or circuitous route. This scheme has been followed by Pauthier.

Several circumstances had led me to doubt this view. First (though on this I lay little stress), we go on upon the old bearing of E.N.E. There is no indication of a change to due north such as would be involved in the journey to Bâi. Next, we have no ground that I can learn for believing that the rivers flowing south from the Thian Shan afford *Jasper*, i.e. *Jade*. This is the product of rivers flowing north from the Kuen Lun and Karakorum. Professor Vámbéry also has favoured me with a note, in which he expresses a strong opinion that Polo's Pein "must have existed on the way from Khotan to Komsu along the Khotan Deria (River), a road which is even now much frequented. Marco Polo speaks of cotton growing in Pein. I know for certain that cotton begins to grow only south of Aksu, and Bâi has almost the coldest climate of the *Six Towns*" (i.e. of Eastern Turkestan).

Since reading Johnson's Report of his Journey to Khotan I am able to feel tolerable certainty as to the position of Charchan, and as to the fact that Marco followed a direct route from Khotan to the interior of

Lake Lop. Pein, then, I have little doubt, was identical with PIMA,\* which was the first city reached by Hwen Thsang on his return to China after quitting Khotan, and which lay 300 *li* east of the latter city. The *Si-yu-ki*, followed by St. Martin in his map, puts Pima west of Khotan, but this is quite inconsistent both with the direction of the returning pilgrims' route, and with other notices of Pima quoted in Rémusat's History of Khotan. These place Pima 330 *li* to the eastward of Khotan, on the banks of a river flowing from the east and entering the Sandy Desert. Johnson found Khotan rife with stories of former cities overwhelmed by the shifting sands of the Desert, and these sands appear to have been advancing for ages; for far to the north-east of Pima, even in the 7th century, were to be found the deserted and ruined cities of the ancient kingdoms of *Tuhola* and *Shemathona*. "Where anciently were the seats of flourishing cities and prosperous communities," says a Chinese author, speaking of this region, "is nothing now to be seen but a vast desert, all has been buried in the sands, and the wild camel is hunted on those arid plains."

Pima cannot have been far from *Kima*, visited by Johnson, if it were not practically identical therewith. This is a town of 7000 houses lying east of Ikhi, and about 69 miles distant from it. The road for the most part lies through a highly cultivated and irrigated country, flanked by the sandy desert at 3 or 4 miles to the left.

(V. d'É. XIV. 177. V. d'É. II. 1. 268. *Il de la Ville de Khotan*, 63 66, *Klap. Asiat. Hist. Russ.*, p. 185.)

NOTE 2. The Jasper and Chalcedony colour may be probably only varieties of the semi-precious mineral called by us popularly *jade*, by the Chinese *Yu*, by the Eastern Turks *Kash*, by the Persians *Yashm*, which last is no doubt the same word with *Jarris* and therefore with *Jasper*. The Greek Jasper was in reality according to Mr. Kopp, a green Chalcedony.

The Jade of Turkestan is chiefly derived from water-worn boulders fished up by divers in the rivers of Khotan, but it is also got from mines in the Karakorum range. "Some of the Jade," says Pimkowski, "is as white as snow, some dark green, like the most beautiful emerald (?) others yellow, vermilion, and jet black. The rarest and most esteemed varieties are the white speckled with red, and the green veined with gold" (l. 395). The Jade of Khotan appears to be first mentioned by Chinese authors in the time of the Han Dynasty under Wuti (B.C. 140-86). In A.D. 541 an image of Buddha sculptured in Jade was sent as an offering from Khotan; and in 632 the process of fishing for the material in the rivers of Khotan, as practised down to modern times, is mentioned. The importation of Jade or *Yu* from this quarter probably gave the name of *Kia-yu-Kuan* or "Jade Gate" to the fortified Pass looking in this direction on the extreme N.W. of China Proper, between

Shachau and Suchau. (*H. de la V. de Khuden*, 2, 17, 23; also see *J. R. G. S.* XXXVI. 165, and *Cathay*, 130, 564; *Ritter*, II. 213.)

NOTE 3.—Possibly this may refer to the custom of temporary marriages which seems to prevail in most towns of Central Asia which are the halting-places of caravans, and the morals of which are much on a par with those of seaport towns, from analogous causes. Thus at Meshid Khanikoff speaks of the large population of young and pretty women ready, according to the accommodating rules of Shiah Mahomedanism, to engage in marriages which are perfectly lawful, for a month, a week, or even twenty-four hours. Kashgar is also noted in the East for its *chaukans*, young women, with whom the traveller may readily form an alliance for the period of his stay, be it long or short. (*Khan. Mém.* p. 98; *Russ. in Central Asia*, 52; *J. A. S. B.* XXVI. 262; *Burnes*, III. 195; *Vigne*, II. 201.)

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

### OF THE PROVINCE OF CHARCHAN.

CHARCHAN is a Province of Great Turkey, lying between north-east and east. The people worship Mahommet. There are numerous towns and villages, and the chief city of the kingdom bears its name, Charchan. The Province contains rivers which bring down jasper and chalcedony, and these are carried for sale into Cathay where they fetch great prices. The whole of the Province is sandy, and so is the road all the way from Pein, and much of the water that you find is bitter and bad. However at some places you do find fresh and sweet water. When an army passes through the land, the people escape with their wives, children, and cattle a distance of two or three days' journey into the sandy waste; and knowing the spots where water is to be had they are able to live there, and to keep their cattle alive, whilst it is impossible to discover them; for the wind immediately blows the sand over their track.

Quitting Charchan, you ride some five days through the sands, finding none but bad and bitter water, and then



# CHAP. XXXVIII. THE PROVINCE OF CHARCHAN.

you come to a place where the water is sweet. And now I will tell you of a province called Lop, in which there is a city also called Lop, which you come to at the end of those five days. It is at the entrance of the great Desert, and it is here that travellers repose before entering on the Desert.'

NOTE 1.—Though the *Lake* of Lob or Lop appears on all our maps, from Chinese authority, the latter does not seem to have supplied information as to a town so called. We have, however, indications of the existence of such a place, both medieval and recent. The Persian geography called *Haft Iklim* (the Seven Climates) describing the Great Basin of Eastern Turkestan, says "To the S.E. reigns a vast desert, presenting only arid tracts, and hills of shifting sand. Formerly there were here several cities, of which two only have preserved their names, viz. *Tob* and *Kank*. All the rest are buried in sand." Here Quatremère happily suggests that *Tob* should be read *Lob*, and identified with the Lop of our text. Again in the short notices of the cities of Turkestan which Mr Wathen collected at Bombay from pilgrims of those regions on their way to Mecca, we find the following "*Lopp* Lopp is situated at a great distance from Yarkand. The inhabitants are principally Chinese; but a few Uzbeks reside there. Lopp is remarkable for a salt water Lake in its vicinity." And in Johnson's account of his observations in Khotan, speaking of a road from Tibet into Khotan alleged to be passable by wheeled carriages, he says "This route . . . leads not only to Ilich and Yarkand, but also to *Lop*, to the large and important city of Karashahr." And among the routes attached to Mr Johnson's original Report, we have—

"Route No. VII. *Kirta* (see note 2 to last chapter) to CHARCHAN and LOB (*from native information*)" is follows.

	Kirta to	Distance in Miles	Remarks
1.	Usulun Langar	16	A Posthouse.
2.	Nia	17	Village, 50 Houses.
3.	Kumrabad Langar	16	10 Houses.
4.	Khadalak	20	Encampment and Gold Mine.
5.	Akmaran	17	Do do.
6.	Kukmaran	16	Do. do.
7.	Egar	19	Do. do. and Well.
8.	Chakalak	17	Grazing Ground.
9.	CHARCHAN	16	Village, 500 Houses, and Cultivation.
10.	Encampment	20	Shepherds' Tents.
11-14.	Do. do.	21, 18, 17, 19	Do.
15.	LOB	20	Village, and large Lake with fish in it.

I cannot doubt that in the CHACHAN and LOB of this itinerary we have Marco's Charchan and Lop; and that his route to the verge of the Great Desert is thus made clear. He omits the usual estimate of the extent of "the province of Charchan," but the five days' journey from Charchan to Lop is fairly represented by Mr. Johnson's report of six marches averaging 19 miles each, from Chachan to Lob.

*Nia*, 33 miles from Kiria, is possibly a vestige of the ancient city of Ni-jiang of the old Chinese Itineraries, which lay 200 *li* (from 30 to 40 miles) on the China side of Pima, in the middle of a great marsh, and formed the eastern frontier of Khotan bordering on the Desert. (*J. R. G. S.* XXXVII. pp. 13 and 44; *N. et Ext.* XIV. 474; *J. A. S. B.* IV. 656; *H. de la V. de Kohten*, u.s.)

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

### OF THE CITY OF LOP AND THE GREAT DESERT.

LOP is a large town at the edge of the Desert which is called the Desert of Lop, and is situated between east and north-east. It belongs to the Great Kaan, and the people worship Mahommet. Now, such persons as propose to cross the Desert take a week's rest in this town to refresh themselves and their cattle; and then they make ready for the journey, taking with them a month's supply for man and beast. On quitting this city they enter the Desert.

The length of this Desert is so great that 'tis said it would take a year and more to ride from one end of it to the other. And here, where its breadth is least, it takes a month to cross it. 'Tis all composed of hills and valleys of sand, and not a thing to eat is to be found on it. But after riding for a day and a night you find fresh water, enough mayhap for some 50 or 100 persons with their beasts, but not for more. And all across the Desert you will find water in like manner, that is to say, in some 28 places altogether you will find good water, but in no great quantity; and in four places also you find brackish water.

Beasts there are none: for there is nought for them to

eat. But there is a marvellous thing related of this Desert, which is that when travellers are on the move by night, and one of them chances to lag behind or to fall asleep or the like, when he tries to gain his company again he will hear spirits talking, and will suppose them to be his comrades. Sometimes the spirits will call him by name; and thus shall a traveller oftentimes be led astray so that he never finds his party. And in this way many have perished. [Sometimes the stray travellers will hear as it were the tramp and hum of a great cavalcade of people away from the real line of road, and taking this to be their own company they will follow the sound; and when day breaks they find that a cheat has been put on them and that they are in an ill plight.<sup>2</sup>] Even in the day time one hears those spirits talking. And sometimes you shall hear the sound of a variety of musical instruments, and still more commonly the sound of drums. [Hence in making this journey 'tis customary for travellers to keep close together. All the animals too have bells at their necks, so that they cannot easily get astray. And at sleeping time a signal is put up to show the direction of the next march.]

So thus it is that the Desert is crossed.

NOTE 1. It is difficult to reconcile with our map the statement of a 30 days journey across the Desert from Lop to Shachau. Ritter's extracts indeed regarding this Desert shew that the constant occurrence of sandhills and deep drifts makes the passage extremely difficult for carts and cattle (III. 375). But I suspect that there is some material error in the longitude of Lake Lop as represented in our maps, and that it should be placed considerably more to the westward than we find it therein. By Kiepert's Map of Asia Khotan is not far short of 600 miles from the western extremity of Lake Lop. By Johnson's itinerary (including his own journey to Kiria) it is only 338 miles from Ilchi to Lob. And our text is in accordance with Johnson for that part of the distance that we can compare (assuming my identification of Charchan of course).

NOTE 2.—“The waste and desert places of the Earth are, so to speak, the characters which sin has visibly impressed on the outward creation ;

its signs and symbols there. . . . Out of a true feeling have ever conceived of the Wilderness as the haunt of evil spirits. In the old Persian religion Ahriman and his evil Spirits inhabit the steppes and wastes of Turan, to the north of the happy Iran, which stands under the dominion of Ormuzd; exactly as with the Egyptians, the evil Typhon is the Lord of the Libyan sand-wastes, and Osiris of the fertile Egypt" (*Archbp. Trench, Studies in the Gospels*, p. 7). Terror and the seeming absence of a beneficent Providence are surely the suggestions of the Desert which led men to associate it with evil spirits, rather than the figure with which this passage begins; no spontaneous conception surely, however appropriate as a moral image.

"According to the belief of the nations of Central Asia," says I. J. Schmidt, "the earth and its interior, as well as the encompassing atmosphere, are filled with Spiritual Beings, which exercise an influence partly beneficent, partly malignant, on the whole of organic and inorganic nature. . . . Especially are Deserts and other wild or uninhabited tracts, or regions in which the influences of nature are displayed on a gigantic and terrible scale, regarded as the chief abode or rendezvous of evil Spirits. . . . And hence the steppes of Turan, and in particular the great sandy Desert of Gobi have been looked on as the dwelling-place of malignant beings, from days of hoar antiquity."

The Chinese historian Matwanlin informs us that there were two roads from China into the Uighur country (towards Karashahr). The longest but easiest road was by Kamul. The other was much shorter, and apparently corresponded, as far as Lop, to that described in this chapter. "By this you have to cross a plain of sand, extending for more than 100 leagues. You see nothing in any direction but the sky and the sands, without the slightest trace of a road; and travellers find nothing to guide them but the bones of men and beasts, and the droppings of camels. During the passage of this wilderness you hear sounds, sometimes of singing, sometimes of wailing; and it has often happened that travellers going aside to see what those sounds might be have strayed from their course and been entirely lost; for they were voices of spirits and goblins. 'Tis for these reasons that travellers and merchants often prefer the much longer route by Kamul." (*Visdelou*, p. 139.)

"In the Desert" (this same desert), says Fahian, "there are a great many evil demons; there are also sirocco winds, which kill all who encounter them. There are no birds or beasts to be seen; but so far as the eye can reach, the route is marked out by the bleached bones of men who have perished in the attempt to cross."

Hwen Thsang in his passage of the Desert, both outward and homeward, speaks of visual illusions; such as visions of troops marching and fighting, with gleaming arms and waving banners, constantly shifting, vanishing, and reappearing, "imagery created by demons." A voice behind him calls "Fear not! fear not!" Troubled by these fantasies on one occasion he prays to Kwanin (a Buddhist divinity); still he could

not entirely get rid of them; but as soon as he had pronounced a few words from the *Prajna* (a holy book) they vanished in the twinkling of an eye.

These goblins are not peculiar to the Gobi, though that appears to be their most favoured haunt. The awe of the vast and solitary Desert raises them in all similar localities. Pliny speaks of the phantoms that appear and vanish in the deserts of Africa; Mas'udi tells of the *Ghûls*, which in the deserts appear to travellers by night and in lonely hours; the traveller taking them for comrades follows and is led astray. But the wise revile them and the *Ghûls* vanish. Thus also Apollonius of Tyana and his companions, in a desert near the Indus by moonlight, see an *Empusa* or *Ghûl*, taking many forms. They revile it, and it goes off uttering shrill cries. Mas'udi also speaks of the mysterious voices heard by lone wayfarers in the Desert, and he gives a rational explanation of them. Ibn Batuta relates a like legend of the Western Sahara: "If the messenger be solitary the demons sport with him and fascinate him, so that he strays from his course and perishes." The Afghan and Persian wildernesses also have their *Ghûl-i-Badban* or Goblin of the Waste, a gigantic and fearful spectre which devours travellers; and even the Gael of the West Highlands have the *Dirceach Ghlinn Eitidh*, the Desert Creature of Glen Eitidh which, one-handed, one-eyed, one-legged, seems exactly to answer to the Arabian *Nesnas* or *Empusa*. Nicolo Conti in the Chaldaean Desert is aroused at midnight by a great noise, and sees a vast multitude pass by. The merchants tell him that these are demons who are in the habit of traversing these deserts. (*Schmidt's Sam. Sagen*, p. 352. *V et V de H T* 23, 28, 289. *Pliny*, VII. 2, *Philostratus*, Bk. II. ch. iv, *Prudentius*, III. 315-324. *Bals Fakhri*, *Campbell's Popular Tales of the W. Highlands* IV. 326. *I B* IV. 382. *Elphinstone*, I. 291, *Chodsko's Pop. Poetry of Persia*, p. 48, *Conti*, p. 4.)

The sound of musical instruments, chiefly of Drums, is a phenomenon of another class, and is really produced in certain situations among sandhills when the sand is disturbed. A very striking account of a phenomenon of this kind regarded as supernatural is given by Prior Odoric, whose experience I fancy I have traced to the *Reg Rouda* or "Flowing Sand" north of Kabul. Besides this celebrated example, which has been described also by the Emperor Baber, I have noted that equally well-known one of the *Jibal Nakûs* or "Hill of the Bell" in the Sinai Desert; Wadi Hamadé in the vicinity of the same Desert; the *Jibal-ul-Thabûl*, or "Hill of the Drums," between Medina and Mecca; one on the Island of Egg in the Hebrides, discovered by James Cook; one among the Medanos or Sandhills of Arequipa, described to me by Mr. C. Markham; the Bramador or rumbling mountains of Peru; one in hills between the Ulster and the Irish in the vicinity of the Anni, called the Almanac Hills, because the sounds are supposed to prognosticate weather changes; and a remarkable example near Kolberg on the shore of Pomerania. (*See Odoric*, p. cxviii. 150, 398; *Kitter*, II. 20.

## CHAPTER XL

## CONCERNING THE GREAT PROVINCE OF TANGUT.

AFTER you have travelled thirty days through the Desert as I have described, you come to a city called SACHIN, lying between north-east and east; it belongs to the Great Kaan, and is in a province called TANGUT.<sup>1</sup> The people are for the most part Idolaters, but there are also some Nestorian Christians and some Saracens. The Idolaters have a peculiar language, and are no traders, but live by their agriculture.<sup>2</sup> They have a great many abbeys and minsters full of idols of sundry fashions, to which they pay great honour and reverence, worshipping them and sacrificing to them with much ado. For example, such as have children will feed up a sheep in honour of the idol, and at the New Year, or on the day of the Idol's Feast, they will take their children and the sheep along with them into the presence of the idol with great ceremony. Then they will have the sheep slaughtered and cooked, and again present it before the idol with like reverence, and leave it there before him, whilst they are reciting the offices of their worship, and their prayers for the idol's blessing on their children. And if you will believe them the idol feeds on the meat that is set before it! After these ceremonies they take up the flesh and carry it home, and call together all their kindred, to eat it with them in great festivity [the idol-priests receiving for their portion the head, feet, entrails, and skin, with some part of the meat]. After they have eaten they collect the bones that are left and store them carefully in a hutch.<sup>3</sup>

And you must know that all the Idolaters in the world burn their dead. And when they are going to carry a body to the burning the kinsfolk build a wooden house on the way to the spot, and drape it with cloths of silk and When the body is going past this building they

call a *hañ* and set before it wine and meat and other eatables; and this they do with the assurance that the defunct will be received with the like attentions in the other world. All the minstrelsy in the town goes playing before the body; and when it reaches the burning-place the kinsfolk are prepared with figures cut out of parchment and paper in the shape of men and horses and camels, and also with round pieces of paper like gold coins, and all these they burn along with the corpse. For they say that in the other world the defunct will be provided with slaves and cattle and money, just in proportion to the amount of such pieces of paper that has been burnt along with him.<sup>4</sup>

But they never burn their dead until they have [sent for the astrologers, and told them the year, the day, and the hour of the deceased person's birth, and when the astrologers have ascertained under what constellation, planet, and sign he was born, they declare the day on which by the rules of their art he ought to be burnt]. And till that day arrive they keep the body, so that 'tis sometimes a matter of six months, more or less, before it comes to be burnt.<sup>5</sup>

Now the way they keep the body in the house is this. They make a coffin first of a good span in thickness, very carefully joined, and daintily painted. This they fill up with camphor and spices to keep off corruption [stopping the joints with pitch and lime], and then they cover it with a fine cloth. Every day as long as the body is kept, they set a table before the dead covered with food; and they will have it that the soul comes and eats and drinks; wherefore they leave the food there as long as would be necessary in order that one should partake. Thus they do daily. And worse still! Sometimes those soothsayers shall tell them that 'tis not good luck to carry out the corpse by the door, so they have to break a hole in the wall, and to draw it out that way when it is taken to the burning.<sup>6</sup>

And these, I assure you, are the practices of all the idolaters of those countries.

However, we will quit this subject, and I will tell you of another city which lies towards the north-west at the extremity of the desert.

NOTE 1.—Tangut (*Tangkut*) is a name very conspicuous in the Mongol era. The word (*Tanggud*) is properly a Mongol plural, designating certain tribes of Tibetan blood, called by the Chinese *Tanghiang*, who established an independent kingdom on the N.W. frontier of China, with their capital at Ninghia on the Yellow River, during the confusion that prevailed at the end of the 10th century. This kingdom, called by the Chinese Hia, and by the Mongols TANGUT, was several times invaded by Chinghiz, and it was on the campaign of its final conquest that he died in 1227. In a general way Tangut corresponded to the modern province of Kansuh, and, indeed, as Pauthier shews, the latter name was under the Mongol emperors the official Chinese designation of the provincial government popularly called Tangut. It was sometimes considered to embrace Kamul and Turfan on the one hand and Singanfu on the other. The name is no longer used in China, but is still known to the Mongols, who, however, now apply it to *Tibet*. In this sense it is often used by Pallas and other Russian or quasi-Russian writers.

*Sachiu* is SHACHAU, "Sand-district," an outpost of China Proper, at the eastern verge of the worst part of the Sandy Desert. It is recorded to have been fortified in the 1st century as a barrier against the Hiongnu. (*Ritter*, II. 205; *Neumann*, p. 616; *Cathay*, 269, 274; *Erdmann*, 155; *Erman*, II. 267.)

NOTE 2.—By *Idolaters* Polo here means Buddhists, as generally. We do not know whether the Buddhism here was a recent introduction from Tibet, or a relic of the old Buddhism of Khotan and other Central Asian kingdoms, but most probably it was the former, and the "peculiar language" ascribed to them may have been, as Neumann supposes, Tibetan. This language in modern Mongolia answers to the Latin of the Mass Book, indeed with a curious exactness, for in both cases the holy tongue is not that of the original propagators of the respective religions, but that of the hierarchy which has assumed their government. In the Lamaitic convents of China and Manchuria also the Tibetan only is used in worship, except at one privileged temple at Peking (*Koeppen*, II. 288). The language intended by Polo may however have been a Chinese dialect, (see note 4). The Nestorians in Tangut must have been tolerably numerous, for it formed a metropolitan province of their Church.



NOTE 3.—A practice resembling this is mentioned by Pallas, existing among the Buddhist Kalmaks, a relic of their old Shaman superstitions, which the Lamas profess to deny, but sometimes take part in. "Rich Kalmaks select from their flock a ram for dedication which gets the name of *Tengri Tokko*, "Heaven's Ram." It must be a white one with a yellow head. He must never be shorn or sold, but when he gets old, and the owner chooses to dedicate a fresh one, then the old one must be sacrificed. This is usually done in autumn when the sheep are fattest, and the neighbours are called together to eat the sacrifice. A fortunate day is selected, and the ram is slaughtered amid the cries of the sorcerer directed towards the sunrise, and the diligent sprinkling of milk for the benefit of the Spirits of the Air. The flesh is eaten, but the skeleton with a part of the fat is burnt on a turf altar erected on four pillars of an ell and a half high, and the skin, with the head and feet, are then hung up in the way practised by the Buraets.' (*Sammlungen*, II. 346.)

NOTE 4.—Several of the customs of Tangut mentioned in this chapter are essentially Chinese, and are perhaps introduced here because it was on entering Tangut that the traveller first came in contact with Chinese peculiarities. This is true of the manner of forming coffins, and keeping them with the body in the house, serving food before the coffin whilst it is so kept, the burning of paper and papier-mâché figures of slaves, horses, &c., at the tomb. Chinese settlers were very numerous at Shachau and the neighbouring Kwachau, even in the 10th century (*Ritter*, II. 213). Even as regards the South of China many of the circumstances mentioned here are strictly applicable, as may be seen in Doolittle's *Social Life of the Chinese* (see for example p. 135, also *Astley*, IV. 93-5, or *Marsden's* quotations from *Duhalde*). The custom of burning the dead has been for several centuries disused in China, but we shall see hereafter that Polo represents it as general in his time. On the custom of burning gift paper in the form of gold coin, as well as of paper clothing, paper houses, furniture, slaves, &c., see also *Medhurst*, p. 213, and *Küld*, 177-8. The manufacture of mock money is a large business in Chinese cities. In Fuhchau there are more than 30 large establishments where it is kept for sale (*Doolittle*, 541). There can be little doubt that these latter customs are symbols of the ancient sacrifices of human beings and valuable property on such occasions. Even when the present Manchu dynasty first occupied the throne of China, they still retained such practices. At the death of Kanghi's mother, however, in 1718, when four young girls offered themselves for sacrifice on the tomb of their mistress, the emperor would not allow it, and prohibited for the future the sacrifice of life or the destruction of valuables on such occasions. (*Devisant*, *Pey*, I. 304.)

NOTE 5.—Even among the Tibetans and Mongols burning is only one of the modes of disposing of the dead. "They sometimes bury

their dead; often they leave them exposed in their coffins, or cover them with stones, paying regard to the sign under which the deceased was born, his age, the day and hour of his death, which determine the mode in which he is to be interred (or otherwise disposed of. For this purpose they consult some books which are explained to them by the Lamas" (*Timk.* II. 312). The extraordinary and complex absurdities of the books in question are given in detail by Pallas, and curiously illustrate the paragraph in the text (see *Sammlungen*, II. 254 *seqq.*).

NOTE 6.—The Chinese have also, according to Duhalde, a custom of making a new opening in the wall of a house by which to carry out the dead; and in their prisons a special hole in the wall is provided for this office. This same custom exists among the Esquimaux, as well as, according to Sonnerat, in Southern India, and it used to exist in certain parts both of Holland and of Central Italy. In the "clean village of Broek," near Amsterdam, those special doors may still be seen. And in certain towns of Umbria, such as Perugia, Assisi, and Gubbio, this opening was common, elevated some feet above the ground, and known as the "Door of the Dead."

I find in a list of popular French superstitions, amounting to 479 in number, condemned by Maupas du Tour, Bishop of Evreux in 1664, the following: "When a woman lies in of a dead child, it must not be taken out by the door of the chamber but by the window, for if it were taken out by the door the woman would never lie in of any but dead children."

And the Rev. Mr. Jaeschke writes to me from Lahoul, in British Tibet: "Our Lama (from Central Tibet) tells us that the owner of a house and the members of his family when they die are carried through the house-door; but if another person dies in the house his body is removed by some other aperture, such as a window, or the smokehole in the roof, or a hole in the wall dug expressly for the purpose. Or a wooden frame is made, fitting into the doorway, and the body is then carried through; it being considered that by this contrivance the evil consequences are escaped that might ensue, were it carried through the ordinary, and, so to say, *undisguised* house-door! Here, in Lahoul and the neighbouring countries, we have not heard of such a custom."

(*Duhalde*, quoted by Marsden; *Semedo*, p. 175; *Mr. Sala in N. and Q.*, 2nd S. XI. 322; *Lubbock*, p. 500; *Sonnerat*, I. 86; *Liebrecht's Gervasius of Tilbury*, Hannover, 1856, p. 224.)

## CHAPTER XLI.

## OF THE PROVINCE OF CAMUL.

CAMUL is a province which in former days was a kingdom. It contains numerous towns and villages, but the chief city bears the name of CAMUL. The province lies between two deserts; for on the one side is the Great Desert of Lop, and on the other side is a small desert of three days' journey in extent.<sup>1</sup> The people are all Idolaters, and have a peculiar language. They live by the fruits of the earth, which they have in plenty, and dispose of to travellers. They are a people who take things very easily, for they mind nothing but playing and singing and dancing and enjoying themselves.<sup>2</sup>

And it is the truth that if a foreigner comes to the house of one of these people to lodge, the host is delighted, and desires his wife to put herself entirely at the guest's disposal, whilst he himself gets out of the way, and comes back no more until the stranger shall have taken his departure. The guest may stay and enjoy the wife's society as long as he lists, whilst the husband has no shame in the matter, but indeed considers it an honour. And all the men of this province are made wittols of by their wives in this way.<sup>3</sup> The women themselves are fair and wanton.

Now it came to pass during the reign of MANGU KHAAN, that as lord of this province he came to hear of this custom, and he sent forth an order commanding them under grievous penalties to do so no more [but to provide public hostels for travellers]. And when they heard of this they were much vexed thereat. [For at first they had in place they carried it out. But then they found that the lands were no longer fruitful, and that many mishaps befell them.] So they collected together and prepared a grand present which they sent to their Lord, beseeching him graciously to let them retain the cus-

inherited from their ancestors; for it was by reason of the usage that their gods bestowed upon them all the good things that they possessed, and without it they saw no how they could continue to exist.<sup>4</sup> When the Prince had heard their petition his reply was: "Since ye must needs keep your shame, keep it then," and so he left them a liberty to maintain their naughty custom. And they always have kept it up, and do so still.

Now let us quit Camul and I will tell you of another province which lies between north-west and north, and belongs to the Great Kaan.

---

NOTE 1.—Kamul (or Komul) does not fall into the great line of travel towards Cathay which Marco is following. His notice of it, and of the next province, forms a digression like that which he has already made to Samarkand. It does not appear even that Marco himself has visited it; his father and uncle may have done so on their first journey as one of the chief routes to Northern China from Western Asia lie through this city and has done so for many centuries. This was the route described by Pegolotti as that of the Italian traders in the century following Polo; it was that followed by Marignolli, by the envoys of Shah Rukh at a later date, and at a much later by Benedict Goës. The people were in Polo's time apparently Buddhist, as the Uighurs inhabiting this region had been from an old date; in Shah Rukh's time (1430) we find a mosque and a great Buddhist Temple cheek by jowl whilst Ramusio's friend Hajji Mahammed speaks of Kamul as the first Mahomedan city met with in travelling from China.

Kamul stands on an oasis carefully cultivated by aid of reservoir for irrigation, and is noted in China for its rice and for some of its fruits, especially melons and grapes. It is still a place of some consequence, standing near the bifurcation of two great roads from China one passing north and the other south of the Thian Shan, and it was the site of the Chinese commissariat depôts for the garrisons to the westward. It was lost to the Chinese in 1865.

Kamul appears to have been the see of a Nestorian bishop. A Bishop of Kamul is mentioned as present at the inauguration of the Catholicos Denha in 1266. (*Russians in Cent. Asia*, 129; *Ritter*, II. 255; *Marco's Cathay*, passim; *Assemani*, II. 455-6.)

NOTE 2.—Expressed almost in the same words is the statement made by a Chinese writer to the people of Khoten in the same century (*Reiser*, IX. 116.)

NOTE 3.—Pauthier's text has "*gout si honni de leur malice comme vous avez eux.*" Here the Crusca has "*sono bezzì delle loro malie,*" and the Lat. Geog. "*sunt bezzì de suis ueribus.*" The Crusca Vocab. has inserted *basso* with the meaning we have given, on the strength of this passage. It occurs also in Dante, *Paradiso*, xix. 137, in the general sense of *disgraced*.

The shameful custom here spoken of is ascribed by Polo also to a province of Eastern Tibet, and by popular report in modern times to the Hazaras of the Hindu Kush, a people of Mongolian blood, as well as to certain nomade tribes of Persia, to say nothing of the like accusation against our own ancestors which has been drawn from Laonicus Chalcondylas. The old Arab traveller Ibn Muhalhal (10th century) also relates the same of the Hazlakh (probably *Kharikh*) Turks: "Ducis alicujus uxor vel filia vel soror, quum mercatorum agmen in terram venit, eos adit, eorumque lustrat faciem. Quorum si quis earum afficit admiratione hunc domum suam ducit, eumque apud se hospitio excipit, eique benigne facit. Atque marito suo et filio fratrique rerum necessariorum curam demandat, nequedum hospes apud eam habitat, nisi necessarium est, maritus eam adit." A like custom prevails among the Chukchis and Koryaks in the vicinity of Kamtschatka. (*Elphinstone's Caubul*, Wood, p. 201, *Burnes*, who discredits, II. 153, III. 163; *Lach Chalcond* 1650, p. 48 49; *Kurd de Schlotzer*, p. 13; *Erman*, II. 530.)

NOTE 4.—So the Jewish rabble to Jeremiah "Since we left off to burn incense to the Queen of Heaven, and to pour out drink-offerings to her, we have wanted all things, and have been consumed by the sword and by famine" (*Jerem* xlv 16)

## CHAPTER XLII.

### OF THE PROVINCE OF CHINGINTALAS.

CHINGINTALAS is also a province at the verge of the Desert, and lying between north-west and north. It has an extent of sixteen days' journey, and belongs to the Great Khan, and contains numerous towns and villages. There are three different races of people in it—Mongols, Tartars, and some Nestorian Christians. At the northern extremity of this province there is a mountain in which are excellent mines of iron and copper. And you must know that in this same mountain there are also the mines of silver.

which Salamander is made.\* For the real truth is that the Salamander is no beast, as they allege in our part of the world, but is a substance found in the earth; and I will tell you about it.

Everybody must be aware that it can be no animal's nature to live in fire, seeing that every animal is composed of all the four elements.<sup>1</sup> Now I, Marco Polo, had a Turkish acquaintance of the name of Zurficar, and he was a very clever fellow. And this Turk related to Messer Marco Polo how he had lived three years in that region on behalf of the Great Kaan, in order to procure those Salamanders for him.<sup>2</sup> He said that the way they got them was by digging in that mountain till they found a certain vein. The substance of this vein was then taken and crushed, and when so treated it divides as it were into fibres of wool, which they set forth to dry. When dry, these fibres were pounded in a great copper mortar, and then washed, so as to remove all the earth and to leave only the fibres like fibres of wool. These were then spun, and made into napkins. When first made these napkins are not very white, but by putting them into the fire for a while they come out as white as snow. And so again whenever they become dirty they are bleached by being put in the fire.

Now this, and nought else, is the truth about the Salamander, and the people of the country all say the same. Any other account of the matter is fabulous nonsense. And I may add that they have at Rome a napkin of this stuff, which the Grand Kaan sent to the Pope to make a wrapper for the Holy Sudarium of Jesus Christ.<sup>3</sup>

We will now quit this subject, and I will proceed with my account of the countries lying in the direction between north-east and east.

## CHAP. XIII. THE PROVINCE OF CHINGINTALAS.

NOTE 1.—The identification of this province is a difficulty, because the geographical definition is vague, and the name assigned to it has not been traced in other authors. It is said to lie *between north-west and north*, whilst Kamul was said to lie *towards the north-west*. The account of both provinces forms a digression, as is clear from the last words of the present chapter, where the traveller returns to take up his regular route "in the direction between north-east and east." The point from which he digresses, and to which he reverts, is Shachau, and he presumably from Shachau that he assigns bearings to the two provinces forming the subject of the digression. Hence, as Kamul lies *vers maistre*, i.e. north-west, and Chingintalas *entre maistre et tramontaine*, i.e. nor-nor-west, Chingintalas must lie somewhat east of Kamul. And I cannot accept Pauthier's confident identification of the former with an obscure place called *Saiyintala*, in the territory of Urumtsi, lying far to the west of Kamul. Moreover, the province is said to belong to the Great Kaan. Now, *Urumtsi* or Bishbalik belonged not to the Great Kaan but to the empire of Chagatai, or possibly at this time to Kaidu. Rashiduddin, speaking of the frontier between the Kaan and Kaidu, says:—"From point to point are posted bodies of troops under the orders of princes of the blood or other generals, and they often come to blows with the troops of Kaidu. Five of these are cantoned on the verge of the Desert; a sixth in Tangut, near Chagan-Naur (White Lake); a seventh in the vicinity of Karakhoja, a city of the Uighurs, which lies between the two states, and maintains neutrality."

Karakhoja, this neutral town, is near Turfan, to the south-east of Urumtsi, which thus would lie *without* the Kaan's boundary; Kamul and the country north-east of it, in which lies the Chagan-Naur, would lie within it. This country, to the north and north-east of Kamul, unexplored by any modern traveller, unless we put faith in Mr. Atkinson's somewhat hazy narrative (the authenticity of which, as regards his excursion into this part of Chinese Tartary, has been strenuously impugned by Khanikoff), is what I apprehend to be meant by Chingintalas.

Several possible explanations of this name have suggested themselves or been suggested to me. I will mention two.

1. Klaproth states that the Mongols applied to Tibet the name of *Baron-tala*, signifying the "Right Side," i.e. the south-west or south quarter, whilst Mongolia was called *Dagun* (or *Dagun*) *Tala*, i.e. the "Left," or north-east side. It is possible that *Chingintalas* might represent *Dagun Tala* in some like application. The etymology of *Dagun*, a name which in modern times covers the territory of which we are speaking, is similar.

2. Professor Vamberger thinks that it is probably *Chingintalas*, "The Last Plain," and this seems the most probable suggestion of the two, though nothing can be shown.

historical evidence of the application of the name. It is possible that light of this kind may still occur. (See *Chingis in Klaproth's Atlas*, Dict., No. 2134; and for *Barontala*, &c., see *Della Penna, Cronaca del Regno del Thibet*, with Klaproth's notes, p. 6; *D'Avenac, Relation* prefixed to D'Anville's Atlas, p. 11; and *Kircher, China Illustrata*, p. 65.)

\* NOTE 2.—The Altai, or one of its ramifications, is probably the mountain of the text, but so little is known of this part of the Chinese territory that we can learn scarcely anything of its mineral products. Still Martini does mention that asbestos is found "in the Tartar country of *Tangu*," which no doubt is the *Tangu Oola* branch of the Altai to the south of the Upper Yenisei, and in the very region we have indicated as Chingintalas.

NOTE 3.—

"Degli elementi quattro principali,  
Che son la Terra, e l'Acqua, e l'Aria, e l'Foco,  
Composti sono gli universi Animalì,  
Pigliando di ciascuno assai o poco."

—*Dati, La Sfera*, p. 9.

*Zurficar* in the next sentence is a Mahomedan name, *Zu'lfikâr*, the title of Ali's sword.

NOTE 4.—Here the G. Text adds: "*Et je meisme le vi*," intimating, I conceive, his having himself seen specimens of the asbestos—not to his having been at the place.

NOTE 5.—The story of the Salamander passing unhurt through fire is at least as old as Aristotle. But I cannot tell when the fable arose that asbestos was a substance derived from the animal. This belief, however, was general in the middle ages, both in Asia and Europe. "The fable of the Salamander," says Sir Thomas Browne, "hath been much promoted by stories of incombustible napkins and textures which endure the fire, whose materials are called by the name of Salamander's wool, which many, too literally apprehending, conceive some investing part or integument of the Salamander. . . . Nor is this Salamander's wool desumed from any animal, but a mineral substance, metaphorically so called for this received opinion."

Those who knew that the Salamander was a lizard-like animal were indeed perplexed as to its woolly coat. Thus the Cardinal de Vitry is fain to say the creature "*profert ex cute quasi quandam lanam de qua minime contextae comburi non possunt igne*." A *Bestiary*, published by Cahier and Martin, says of it: "*De lui naist une chose qui n'est ny laine ne poil de laine*." Jerome Cardan looked in vain, he says, for hair on the Salamander; Albertus Magnus calls the incombustible fibre "*lana*," and accordingly Bold Baudouin de Selaign, finds the Salamander in the Terrestrial Paradise a "*kind of fire-eating animal*."



## CHAPTER XLIII. THE PROVINCE OF SUXICHU.

...the ... of this ... which he gets woven into ... then he presents to the Pope, and the Pontiff applies it to the purpose mentioned in the text, viz. to cover the holy napkin of St. Veronica.

Gervase of Tilbury writes: "There, which lately at Rome, a broad strap of Salamander skin, like a girdle for the loins, which had been brought thither by Cardinal Peter of Capua. When it had become somewhat soiled by use, I myself saw it cleaned perfectly, and without receiving harm, by being put in the fire.

In Persian the creature is called *Samandar*, *Samandal*, &c., and some derive the word from *Sam*, "fire," and *Andar*, "within." Doubtless it is a corruption of the Greek *Σαλαμάνδρα*, whatever be the origin of that. Bakui says the animal is found at Ghuz, near Herat, and is *like a mouse*. Another author, quoted by D'Herbelot, says it is *like a martin*.

Interesting details regarding the fabrication of cloth and paper from amianth or asbestos are contained in a report presented to the French Institute by M. Sage (date not stated), of which large extracts are given in the *Diction. des Tissus*. He mentions that a *Sudarum* of this material is still shown at the Vatican: we hope it is that which Kublai sent.

M. Sage exhibited incombustible paper made from this material, and had himself seen a small furnace of Chinese origin made from it. Madame Perpenté, an Italian lady, who experimented much with asbestos, found that from a crude mass of that substance threads could be elicited which were ten times the length of the mass itself, and were indeed sometimes several metres in length, the fibres seeming to be involved, like silk in a cocoon. Her process of preparation was much like that described by Marco. She succeeded in carding and reeling the material, made gloves and the like, as well as paper, from it, and sent to the Institute a work printed on such paper.

The Rev. A. Williamson mentions asbestos as found in Shantung. The natives use it for making stoves, crucibles, and so forth.

(See *P. Browne*, I. 293; *Bougars*, I. 1104; *Cahier et Martin*, III. 271; *Cardan, de Rer. Varietate*, VII. 33; *Art. Mag. Opera*, 1551, II. 227, 233; *Fr. Michel, Recherches*, &c., II. 91; *Gerv. of Tilbury*, p. 73; *N. et E.* II. 493; *D. des Tissus*, II. 112; *J. N. China Branch, R. A. S.* Dec. 1867, p. 70.)

## CHAPTER XLIII.

### OF THE PROVINCE OF SUXICHU.

On leaving the province of which I spoke before, you ride ten days between mountains and rivers, and in all that time

you find no human dwelling, or next to none, so that there is nothing for our book to speak of.

At the end of those ten days you come to another province called SUKCHUR, in which there are numerous towns and villages. The chief city is called SUKCHU.<sup>1</sup> The people are partly Christians and partly Idolaters, and all are subject to the Great Kaan.

The great General Province to which all these three provinces belong is called TANGUT.

Over all the mountains of this province rhubarb is found in great abundance, and thither merchants come to buy it, and carry it thence all over the world.<sup>2</sup> [Travellers, however, dare not visit those mountains with any cattle but those of the country, for a certain plant grows there which is so poisonous that cattle which eat it lose their hoofs. The cattle of the country know it and eschew it.<sup>4</sup>] The people live by agriculture, and have not much trade. [They are of a brown complexion. The whole of the province is healthy.]

---

NOTE 1.—Referring apparently to Shachau; see Note 1 and the closing words of last chapter.

NOTE 2.—There is no doubt that the province and city are those of SUKCHAU, but there is a great variety in the readings, and several texts have a marked difference between the name of the province and that of the city, whilst others give them as the same. I have adopted those to which the resultants of the readings of the best texts seem to point, viz., *Succiur* and *Succiu*, though with considerable doubt whether they should not be identical. Pauthier declares that *Suctur*, which is the reading of his favourite MS., is the exact pronunciation, after the vulgar Mongol manner of *Suh-chau-tu*, the *Lu* or circuit of Sukchau, whilst Neumann says that the Northern Chinese constantly add an euphonic particle *or* to the end of words. I confess to little faith in such refinements, when no evidence is produced.

Sukchau is called by Rashiduddin, and by Shah Rukh's ambassadors *Sukchâ*, in exact correspondence with the reading we have adopted for the name of the city, whilst the Russian Envoy Boikoff, in the 17th century, calls it "*Suktsey*, where the rhubarb grows," and Anthony Jodocus, in Hakluyt, by a slight metathesis, *Sewchick*. Sukchâ lies

## CHAP. XLIV. THE CITY OF CAMPICHU

just within the extreme N.W. angle of the Great Wall. It was at Suichau that Benedict Goës was detained, waiting for leave to go on to Peking, eighteen weary months, and there he died just as aid reached him.

NOTE 3.—All the authorities point to the mountainous region south of Suichau and Kanchau, as pre-eminently the source of the real China rhubarb; but it is also produced in Shensi, Shansi, Honan, and Szechuen. Till recently it was almost all exported by Kiakhta and Russia, but some now comes *via* Hankau and Shanghai. I believe the exact species producing the drug has not been botanically ascertained. There is a dissertation on rhubarb in *Ritter*, II. 179, and (only known to me by report) a paper by Dr. Farre, in the *Pharmaceutical Journal* for January, 1866.

NOTE 4.—*Erba* is the title applied to the poisonous growth, which may be either "plant" or "grass." It is not unlikely that it was a plant akin to the *Andromeda ovalifolia*, the tradition of the poisonous character of which prevails everywhere along the Himalaya from Nepal to the Indus. It is notorious for poisoning sheep and goats at Simla and other hill sanatoria; and Dr. Cleghorn notes the same circumstance regarding it that Polo heard of the plant in Tangut, viz., that its effects on flocks imported from the plains are highly injurious, whilst those of the hills do not appear to suffer, probably because they shun the young leaves, which alone are deleterious. Mr. Marsh attests the like fact regarding the *Kalmia angustifolia* of New England, a plant of the same order (*Ericaceae*). Sheep bred where it abounds almost always avoid browsing on its leaves, whilst those brought from districts where it is unknown feed upon it and are poisoned.

Perhaps the same plant, or one of the same family, is alluded to by Firishita, quoting from the *Zafar-Namah*: "On the road from Kashmir towards Tibet there is a plain on which no other vegetable grows but a poisonous grass that destroys all the cattle that taste of it, and therefore no horsemen venture to travel that route." (*Dr. Hugh Cleghorn in J. Agricultural and Hortic. Society of India*, XIV. Part 4; *Marsh's Man and Nature*, p. 40; *Briggs's Firishita*, IV. 449.)

## CHAPTER XLIV.

### OF THE CITY OF CAMPICHU.

CAMPICHU is also a city of Tangut, and a very great and noble one. Indeed it is the capital and place of government of the whole province of Tangut. The people are

Idolaters, Saracens, and Christians, and the latter have three very fine churches in the city, whilst the Idolaters have many minsters and abbeys after their fashion. In these they have an enormous number of idols, both small and great, certain of the latter being a good ten paces in stature; some of them being of wood, others of clay, and others yet of stone. They are all highly polished, and then covered with gold. The great idols of which I speak lie at length.<sup>2</sup> And round about them there are other figures of considerable size, as if adoring and paying homage before them.

Now, as I have not yet given you particulars about the customs of these Idolaters, I will proceed to tell you about them.

You must know that there are among them certain religious recluses who lead a more virtuous life than the rest. These abstain from all lechery, though they do not indeed regard it as a deadly sin; howbeit if any one sin against nature they condemn him to death. They have an Ecclesiastical Calendar as we have; and there are five days in the month that they observe particularly; and on these five days they would on no account either slaughter any animal or eat flesh meat. On those days, moreover, they observe much greater abstinence altogether than on other days.<sup>3</sup>

Among these people a man may take thirty wives, more or less, if he can but afford to do so, each having wives in proportion to his wealth and means; but the first wife is always held in highest consideration. The men endow their wives with cattle, slaves, and money, according to their ability. And if a man dislikes any one of his wives, he just turns her off and takes another. They take to wife their cousins and their fathers' widows (always excepting the man's own mother), holding to be no sin many things that we think grievous sins, and, in short, they live like

Messer Matteo and Messer Marco Polo dwelt a whole year in this city when on a mission.

Now we will leave this and tell you about other provinces towards the north, for we are going to take you a sixty days' journey in that direction.

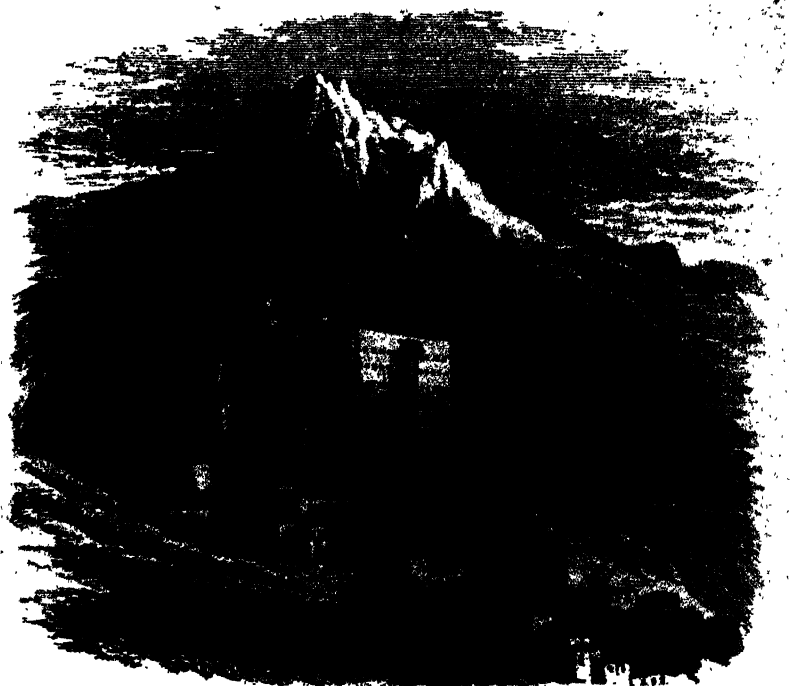
NOTE 1.—Campichiu is undoubtedly Kauchau, which was at this time, as Pauthier tells us, the chief city of the administration of *Kansuh*, corresponding to Polo's Tangut. *Kansuh* itself is a name compounded of the names of the two cities *Kan-chau* and *Suh-chau*.

The difficulties that have been made about the form of the name *Campichiu*, (&c.) in Polo, and the attempts to explain these, are probably alike futile. Quatremère writes the Persian form of the name after Abdurrazzak as *Kamitchou*, but I see that Erdmann writes it after Rashid, I presume on good grounds, as *Chamidschu*, i.e. *Camichu* or *Camichu*. And that this was the Western pronunciation of the name is shown by the form which Pegolotti uses, *Camechu*, i.e. *Camechu*. The *p* in Polo's spelling is probably only a superfluous letter, as in the old spelling of *dampnum*, *contempnere*, *sompnuor*, *tirampus*. In fact, Marignolli writes Polo's *Quinsai* as *Campsay*.

It is worthy of notice that though Ramusio's text prints the names of these two cities as *Succuir* and *Campion*, his own pronunciation of them appears to have been quite well understood by the Persian traveller Hejj: Mahomed, for it is perfectly clear that the latter recognized in these names *Suhchau* and *Kanchau*. (See *Ram.* II. l. 14 V.) The second volume of the *Navigazioni*, containing Polo, was published after Ramusio's death, and it is possible that the names as he himself read them were more correct (e.g. *Succuir*, *Capiru*).

NOTE 2.—This is the meaning of the phrase in the G.T.: "*Cara grande ydre gigent*," as may be seen from Ramusio's *guarano d'india*. Lazari renders the former expression, "*giganteggia in idola*," &c., a phrase very unlike Polo. The circumstance is interesting, because the recumbent Colossus at Kanchau is mentioned both by Hsü: Ma-tsu and by Shah Rukh's people. The latter say: "In this city of Kanchau there is an Idol-Temple 500 cubits square. In the middle is an idol lying at length which measures 50 paces. The sides of the feet are 50 paces long, and the instep is 21 cubits in girth. Behind the head and overhead are other idols of a cubit (2) in length. Behind the head of *Bakshis* as large as life. The action of all is full of life, so that you would think they were alive." These gods represent the favourites in Buddhist worship, and especially the figures of *Vishnu* and *Chakra*. They symbolize *Sakya* Buddha at the start of his career. There is a recumbent figure, perhaps the prototype of the one at Kanchau, in the *Chakra* temple.

in a Vihara close to the Sāl Grove at Kusinagara, where Sakya passed that state, *i.e.* died. The stature of Buddha was, we are told, 80 cubits; but Brāhma, Indra, and the other gods vainly tried to compare his dimensions. Some such rude metaphor is probably embodied in these large images. I have described one 69 feet long in Burma, but others exist of much greater size, though probably none equal to that which Hwen Thsang, in the 7th century, saw near Bamian, which was 1000 feet in length! (*Cathay*, &c. pp. cciii, ccxviii; *Mission to Ava*, p. 32; *V. et V. de H. T.* p. 374)



Great Lama Monastery.

NOTE 3.—Marco is now speaking of the Lamas, or clergy of Tibetan Buddhism. The customs mentioned have varied in details, both locally and with the changes that the system has passed through in the course of time.

The institutes of ancient Buddhism set apart the days of new and full moon to be observed by the *Sramanas* or monks, by fasting, confession, and listening to the reading of the law. It became usual for the laity to take part in the observance, and the number of days was increased to three and then to four. Fahian says that in Ceylon preaching took place on the 8th, 14th, and 15th days of the month. Four is the now most general amongst Buddhist nations, and the days may

is regarded as a kind of Buddhist Sabbath. In the southern countries and in Nepal they occur at the moon's changes. In Tibet and among the Mongol Buddhists they are not at equal intervals, though I find the actual days differently stated by different authorities. Pallas says the Mongols observed the 13th, 14th, and 15th, the three days being brought together, he thought, on account of the distance many Lamas had to travel to the temple—just as in some Scotch country parishes they used to give two sermons in one service for like reason! Koeppen, to whose work this note is much indebted, says the Tibetan days are the 14th, 15th, 29th, and 30th, and adds as to the manner of observance: "On these days, by rule, among the Lamas, nothing should be tasted but farinaceous food and tea; the very devout refrain from all food from sunrise to sunset. The Temples are decorated, and the altar tables set out with the holy symbols, with tapers, and with dishes containing offerings in corn, meal, tea, butter, &c., and especially with small pyramids of dough, or of rice or clay, and accompanied by much burning of incense-sticks. The service performed by the priests is more solemn, the music louder and more exciting, than usual. The lamas make their offerings, tell their beads, and repeat *Om mani padme hom*, &c." In the *concordat* that took place between the Dalai-Lama and the Altun Khaghan, on the reconversion of the Mongols to Buddhism in the 16th century, one of the articles was the entire prohibition of *innang* and the slaughter of animals on the monthly fast days. The practice varies much, however, even in Tibet, with different provinces and sects—a variation which the Ramusian text of Polo implies in these words: "For five days, or *four days*, or *three* in each month, they shed no blood," &c. The days which Mr. Jaeschke names to me differ from the above, and he has not known them to be kept by fasting, while the number observed in the remote west, where he is (Lahaul), is very small.

In Burma the Worship Day, as it is usually called by Europeans, is a very gay scene, the women flocking to the pagodas in their brightest attire. (Koeppen, I. 563-4, II. 139, 307-8; *Pallas, Samml.* II. 166-9.)

NOTE 4.—These matrimonial customs are the same that are afterwards ascribed to the Tartars, so we defer remark.

NOTE 5.—So Pauthier's text, "*en legation*." The G. Text includes Nicolo Polo, and says, "on business of theirs that is not worth mentioning," and with this Ramusio agrees.

## CHAPTER XLV.

### OF THE CITY OF ETZINA.

WHEN you leave the city of Campichu you ride for twelve days, and then reach a city called ETZINA, which is towards the north on the verge of the Sandy Desert; it belongs to the Province of Tangut.<sup>1</sup> The people are Idolaters, and possess plenty of camels and cattle, and the country produces a number of good falcons, both Sakers and Lanners. The inhabitants live by their cultivation and their cattle, for they have no trade. At this city you must needs lay in victuals for forty days, because when you quit Etzina you enter on a Desert which extends forty days' journey to the north, and on which you meet with no habitation nor baiting-place.<sup>2</sup> In the summer-time, indeed, you will fall in with people, but in the winter the cold is too great. You also meet with wild beasts (for there are some small pine-woods here and there), and with numbers of wild asses.<sup>3</sup> When you have travelled these forty days across the Desert you come to a certain province lying to the north. Its name you shall hear presently.

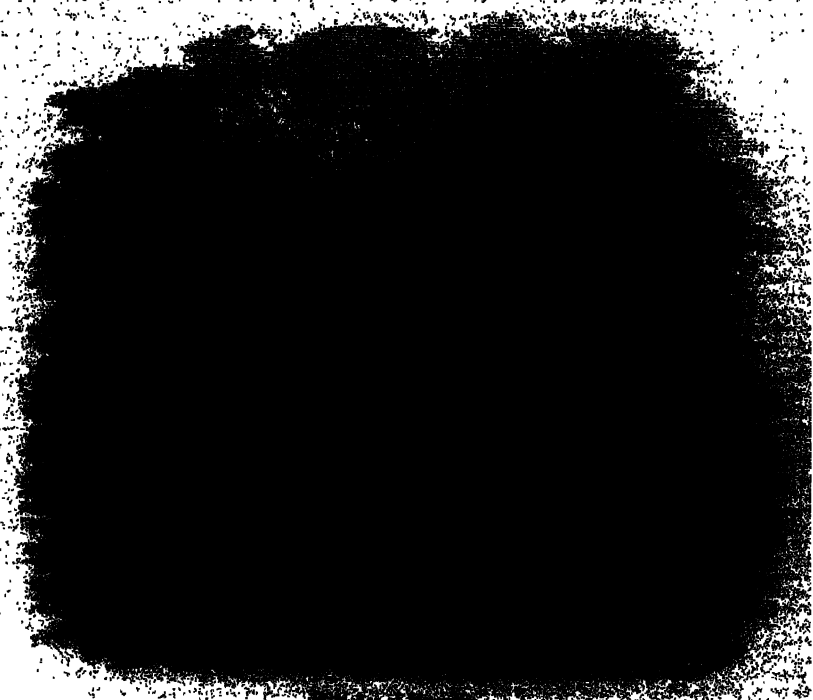
NOTE 1.—Deguignes says that YETSINA is found in a Chinese Map of Tartary of the Mongol era, and this is confirmed by Pauthier, who reads it *Itsinaï*, and adds that the text of the Map names it as one of the seven *Lu* or Circuits of the Province of Kansuh (or Tangut). Indeed, in D'Anville's Atlas we find a river called *Etsina Pira*, running northward from Kanchau, and a little below the 41st parallel joining another from Suhchau. Beyond the junction is a town called *Herbiang*, which probably represents Etzina. Yetsina is also mentioned in Gaubil's History of Chinghiz as taken by that conqueror in 1226, on his last campaign against Tangut. This capture would also seem from Pétis de la Croix to be mentioned by Rashiduddin. Gaubil says the Chinese Geography places Yetsina north of Kanchau and north-east of Suhchau, at a distance of 120 leagues from Kanchau, but observes that this is certainly too great (Gaubil, p. 49).

NOTE 2.—"Herberge" (G. T.). Pauthier has *Herbage*, which is not



## CHAP. XLV. — WILD AND CITY OF CARACORON.

NOTE 3. — The Wild Ass of Mongolia is the *Dicotyles* of Pallas (*Asinus hemionus* of Gray), and identical with the Tibetan *Kiang* of Moillon, and *Capra hemionus* Apertusson. It differs, according to Blyth, only in shades of colour and unimportant markings, from the *Shir Kiar* of Western India and the Persian *Dasarts*, the *Kulan* of Turkistan, which Marco has spoken of in a previous passage (*Itiner. CH. lvi. ; J. A. S. E. XXVIII. 229 seqq.*). There is a fine *Kyang* in the Zoological Gardens.



## CHAPTER XLVI.

### OF THE CITY OF CARACORON.

CARACORON is a city of some three miles in compass. It is surrounded by a strong earthen rampart, for which is scarce there. And beside it there is a great circular wall, in which is a fine palace in which the Governor resides. It is the first city that the Tartars possessed when they entered from

their own country. And now I will tell you all about how they first acquired dominion and spread over the world.

Originally the Tartars dwelt in the north on the border of CHORCHA.<sup>1</sup> Their country was one of great plains; and there were no towns or villages in it, but excellent pasture lands, with great rivers and many sheets of water; in fact it was a very fine and extensive region. But there was no sovereign in the land. They did, however, pay tax and tribute to a great prince who was called in their tongue UNC CAN, the same that we call Prester John, him in fact about whose great dominion all the world talks. The tribute he had of them was one beast out of every ten, and also a tithe of all their other gear.

Now it came to pass that the Tartars multiplied exceedingly. And when Prester John saw how great a people they had become, he began to fear that he should have trouble from them. So he made a scheme to distribute them over sundry countries, and sent one of his Barons to carry this out. When the Tartars became aware of this they took it much amiss, and with one consent they left their country and went off across a desert to a distant region towards the north, where Prester John could not get at them to annoy them. Thus they revolted from his authority and paid him tribute no longer. And so things continued for a time.

NOTE 1.—Karakorum, near the upper course of the River Orkhon is said by Chinese authors to have been founded by Bükü Khan of the Hsuei-Hu or Uigurs, in the 8th century. In the days of Chinghiz we are told that it was the head-quarters of his ally, and afterwards enemy, Togriq Wang Khan, the Prester John of Polo. Okkodai, the successor of Chinghiz established his capital at Karakorum, and founded the walls of his palace in 1234. It continued to be the Mongol head-quarters till 1260 when Mangu Kaan decided to transfer the seat of government to Kaiping north of Peking (*supra* in Prologue, chap. xiii. note 1). The Chinese make the compass of the walls only 5 li, or about a mile. The city, the Imperial Camp in its vicinity, was visited by Plano Carpini (1246) and by Rubruquis (1253). The following is the latter's account of it.

"As regards the city of Caracaron, you must understand that if you go aside the Kaa's own Palace, it is not as good as the Borough of St. Denis; and as for the Palace, the Abbey of St. Denis is worth ten of it! There are two streets in the town; one of which is occupied by the Saracens, and in that is the market-place. The other street is occupied by the Cathayans, who are all craftsmen. Besides these two streets there are some great palaces occupied by the court secretaries. There are also twelve idol temples belonging to different nations, two Mahumméries in which the Law of Mahomet is preached, and one church of the Christians at the extremity of the town. The town is enclosed by a mud-wall, and has four gates. At the east gate they sell millet and other corn, but the supply is scanty; at the west gate they sell rams and goats; at the south gate oxen and waggons; at the north gate horses. . . . Mangu Kaan has a great Court beside the Town-Rampart, which is enclosed by a brick wall, just like our prisons. Inside there is a big palace, within which he holds a drinking-bout twice a year; . . . there are also a number of long buildings like granaries, in which are kept his treasures and his stores of victual" (345-6; 334).

NOTE 2.—CHORCHA (*Ciorcia*) is the Manchu country, whose people were at that time called by the Chinese *Yuché* or *Nisuché*, and by the Mongols *Churché*, or as it is in Sanang Setzen *Jurckid*. The country in question is several times mentioned by Rashiduddin as *Churché*. The founders of the *Kin* Dynasty, which the Mongols superseded in Northern China, were of *Churché* race.

NOTE 3.—A note on Prester John might easily spread over many pages. It is impossible to treat it without some expansion, even though omitting many interesting though not essential points.

The idea that a Christian potentate of enormous wealth and power, and bearing this title, ruled over vast tracts in the far East, was universal in Europe from the middle of the 12th to the end of the 15th century, after which time the Asiatic story seems gradually to have died away, whilst the Royal Presbyter was assigned to a locus in Abyssinia. The equivocal application of the term *India* to the East of Asia and the East of Africa facilitating this transfer. Indeed I have a suspicion, touching to the view now generally taken, that the term may from the first have belonged to the Abyssinian Prince, though circumstances led to its being applied in another quarter for a time.

Be that as it may, the inordinate report of Prester John's magnificence became especially directed from about the year 1220, when a letter full of the most extravagant details of his greatness was said to have been addressed by him to the Pope. The letter was supposed to be the work of the Roman Emperor Frederick II., and was said to have been written by the Emperor's son, the King of Sicily, who was then a prisoner of the Mongols. The letter was said to have been written by the Emperor's son, the King of Sicily, who was then a prisoner of the Mongols.

when the din of the conquests of Chinghiz began to be audible in the West, he was invested with the character of a Christian King, and more or less confounded with the mysterious Prester John.

The first notice of a conquering Asiatic potentate so styled, had been brought to Europe by the Syrian Bishop of Gabala (Gabal, south of Laodicea in Northern Syria), who came in 1145 to lay various grievances before Pope Eugene III. He reported that not long before a certain John, inhabiting the extreme East, king and Nestorian priest, and claiming descent from the Three Wise Kings, had made war on the *Samiard* Kings of the Medes and Persians, and had taken Ecbatana their capital. He was then proceeding to the deliverance of Jerusalem, but was stopped by the Tigris which he could not cross, and compelled by disease in his host to retire.

M. d'Avezac first showed to whom this account must apply, and the subject has more recently been set forth with great completeness and learning by Dr. Gustavus Oppert. The conqueror in question was the Founder of Kara Khitai, which existed as a great Empire in Asia during the last two-thirds of the 12th century. This chief was a prince of the Khitan dynasty of Liao, who escaped with a body of followers from Northern China, on the overthrow of that dynasty by the *Kin* or *Niuché* about 1125. He is called by the Chinese historians Yeliu Tashi; by Abulghazi, Nuzi Taigri Ili; and by Rashiduddin, Nushi (or Fushi) Taifu. Being well received by the *Uigurs* and other tribes west of the Desert who had been subject to the Khitan Empire, he gathered an army and commenced a course of conquest which eventually extended over Eastern and Western Turkestan, including Khwarizm, which became tributary to him. He took the title of *Gurkhan*, said to mean Universal or Suzerain Khan, and fixed at Bala Sagun, north of the Thian Shan, the capital of his Empire, which became known as *Kard* (Black) *Khitai*.\* In 1141 he came to the aid of the King of Khwarizm against *Sanjar* the Seljukian sovereign of Persia (whence the *Samiard* of the Syrian Bishop), who had just taken Samarkand, and defeated that prince with great slaughter. Though the *Gurkhan* himself is not described to have extended his conquests into Persia, the King of Khwarizm followed up the victory by an invasion of that country, in which he plundered the treasury and cities of Sanjar.

This Karacathayan prince is undoubtedly the first conqueror of Asia at all events) to whom the name of Prester John was applied, though how that name arose remains obscure. Oppert supposes the *Gurkhan*, or *Karkhan*, softened in W. Turkish pronunciation to *Yerkhan*, was confounded with *Yerkhanan* or *Johannes*; but he finds no evidence of the conqueror's profession of Christianity except the probable certainly, that the daughter of the last of his later dynasty

But we have seen that the Council of Trent says that the Council was a Council, though on what authority is not clear. There seems a probability at least that it was an error in the translation of Christianity to the Kachathayan prince, which caused the confusion as to the identity of Father John which appears in the new century, of which we shall presently speak. Leaving this doubtful point, it has been pleasantly suggested that the title of Presbyter Johannes was connected with the legends of the immortality of John the Apostle (cf. apoc. 1:10, as he calls himself in the 2nd and 3rd epistles), and the belief referred to by some of the Fathers that he would be the Forerunner of our Lord's second coming as John the Baptist had been of His first.

When the Mongol conquests threw Asia open to Frank travellers in the middle of the 13th century, their minds were full of Prester John; they sought in vain for an adequate representative, but it was not in the nature of things but they should find *some* representative. In fact they found *several*. Apparently no real tradition existed among the Eastern Christians of any such personage, but the persistent demand produced a supply, and the honour of identification with Prester John, after hovering over one head and another, settled finally upon that of the King of the Keraites, whom we find to play the part in our text.

This in Plano Carpani's single mention of Prester John as the King of the Christians of India the Greater, who defeats the Tartars by an elaborate stratagem, Oppian recognizes Sultan Jalaluddin of Khwarezm and his temporary success over the Mongols in Afghanistan. In the Armenian Prince Sempad's account, on the other hand, this Christian King of India is aided by the Tartars to defeat and harass the infidel-bearing Saracens his enemies, and becomes the Mongols' viceroy. In the statement of Rubruguis, though distinct reference is made to the conquering Gurkhan (under the name of Cois Cham of Persians), the title of *King John* is assigned to the Naiman Prince (*Arsakid*) who had married the daughter of the last finest sovereign of Khameneh and usurped his power, whilst with a strange complication of names—the Crit and Merkit (Kerait and Merkit, the two tribes of Mongolia), and Lord of Carscorung, is made the father-in-law of this Naiman Prince. His version of the story, it is true, has so much resemblance to Polo's, that we shall need no words. The Crit and Merkit, he says, were formerly united, but their Lord had abandoned the worship of God and turned idolater, and kept by him those priests of the idols who were his counsellors and ministers. Beyond his dominions at the distance of many leagues, said the priestess of the Great Goddess, there was a great people without a king, who were called the Christians, and they had a powerful king, who was called Prester John.

herds even to the borders of Moal. At that time there was a blacksmith called Chinghis among the Hittites of Moal, who used to lift the cattle of Unc Chan as often as he had stomach for it. When the herdsmen of Unc Chan made complaint to their ruler, the latter assembled an army, and invaded the land of the Moal, and of Chinghis, but he fled and hid himself among the Tartars. So he, having plundered the Moal and Tartars, returned home. And Chinghis addressed the Tartars and Moal, saying: 'It is because we have no leader that we are thus oppressed by our neighbours.' So both Tartars and Moal made Chinghis himself their leader and captain. And having got a host quietly together, he made a sudden onslaught upon Unc and conquered him, and compelled him to flee into Cathay. On that occasion his daughter was taken, and given by Chinghis to one of his sons, to whom she bore Mangu, who now reigneth. . . . The land in which they (the Mongols) first were, and where the residence of Chinghis still exists, is called *Onan Kerule*. But because Caraooran is in the country which was their first conquest, they regard it as a royal city, and there hold the elections of their Chan."

Here we see plainly that the Unc Chan of Rubruquis is the Unc Can or Unecan of Polo. In the narrative of the former, Unc is only connected with King or Paester John; in that of the latter, rehearsing the story as heard some 20 or 25 years later, the two are identified. The shadowy rôle of Prester John has passed from the Ruler of Kara Khitai to the Chief of the Keraites. This transfer brings us to another history.

We have already spoken of the extensive diffusion of Nestorian Christianity in Asia during the early and middle ages. The Christian historian Gregory Abulfaraj relates a curious history of the conversion, in the beginning of the 11th century, of the King of *Kerith* with his people, dwelling in the remote north-east of the land of the Tarks. And that the Keraites continued to profess Christianity down to the time of Chinghiz is attested by Rashiduddin's direct statement, as well as by the numerous Christian princesses from that tribe of whom we hear in Mongol history. It is the chief of this tribe of whom Rubruquis and Polo speak under the name of Unc Khan, and whom the latter identifies with Prester John. His proper name is called Tuli by the Chinese, and Togrul by the Persian historians; but the Kin sovereign of Northern China had conferred on him the title of *Wang on King*, from which his people gave him the slightly corrupted cognomen of *وانگ خان*, which some scholars read *Awang*, and *Awang Khan*, but which the spelling of Rubruquis and Polo shows probably to have been pronounced as *Aung* or *Ung Khan*. The circumstance stated by Rubruquis of his having abandoned the profession of Christianity, is not alluded to by Eastern writers; but in any case his career is not connected with the Faith. I cannot find any satisfactory corroboration of the claim of supremacy over the Mongols which Polo ascribes to him, but that his power and dignity were considerable, appears from

the son of a nobleman, and was a brother to him. He had a high reputation for valour, and was killed by the murder of two of his brothers, who were slain by the father of Chinghis, who then became the first Khan and had since then effectually to recover his position from which he had been expelled. After a reign of many years he was again elected, and in the greatest necessity sought the help of Temujin (afterwards called Chinghis Khan), by whom he was aided with the greatest consideration. This was in 1196. For some years the two chiefs conducted their forays in alliance, but differences springing up between them, the son of Aung Khan entered into a plot to kill Temujin, and in 1203-4 they were in open war. The result will be related in connexion with the next chapters.

We may observe that the idea which Joinville picked up in the East about Prester John corresponds pretty closely with that set forth by Marco Polo. He represents him as one of the princes to whom the Tartars were tributary in the days of their oppression and as "their ancient enemy;" one of their first acts, on being organized under a king of their own, was to attack him and conquer him, slaying all that bore arms, but sparing all monks and priests. The expression used by Joinville in speaking of the original land of the Tartars, "*une grande bertie de sablon*," has not been elucidated in any edition that I have seen. It is the Arabic *Barīya*, "a Desert." No doubt Joinville learned the word in Palestine (see Joinville, p. 143 *seqq.*; see also Oppert, *Der Presb. Johannes in Sage und Geschichte*, and *Cathay*, &c., pp. 173-182). I had not seen Oppert when the latter work was printed. It appears to me almost certain that the letter of Pope Alexander III., written in 1177 (Oppert, p. 2; *Cathay*, p. 175) to the *Rex Indorum, Sanctissimus*, was meant for the king of Abyssinia.

## CHAPTER XLVII

### OF CHINGHIS, AND HOW HE BECAME THE FIRST KHAAN OF THE TARTARS.

Now it came to pass in the year of Christ's Incarnation 1189 that the Tartars made them a King whose name was CHINGHIS-KHAAN. He was a man of great worth and of great ability [eloquence], and valour. And as soon as the news that he had been chosen King was spread through those countries, all the Tartars in the world came to him and owned him for their Lord. And none was so

he maintain the Sovereignty they had given him. What shall I say? The Tartars gathered to him in astonishing multitude, and when he saw such numbers he made a great furniture of spears and arrows and such other arms as they used, and set about the conquest of all those regions till he had conquered eight provinces. When he conquered a province he did no harm to the people or their property, but merely established some of his own men in the country along with a proportion of theirs, whilst he led the remainder to the conquest of other provinces. And when those whom he had conquered became aware how well and safely he protected them against all others, and how they suffered no ill at his hands, and saw what a noble prince he was, then they joined him heart and soul and became his devoted followers. And when he had thus gathered such a multitude that they seemed to cover the earth, he began to think of conquering a great part of the world. Now in the year of Christ 1200 he sent an embassy to Prester John, and desired to have his daughter to wife. But when Prester John heard that Chinghis Kaan demanded his daughter in marriage he waxed very wroth, and said to the Envoys, "What impudence is this, to ask my daughter to wife! Wist he not well that he was my liegeman and serf? Go ye back to him and tell him that I had liever set my daughter in the fire than give her in marriage to him, and that he deserves death at my hand, rebel and traitor that he is!" So he bade the Envoys begone at once, and never come into his presence again. The Envoys, on receiving this reply, departed straightway, and made haste to their master, and related all that Prester John had ordered them to say, keeping nothing back.<sup>1</sup>

---

NOTE 1.—Temujin was born in the year 1155 according to all the European historians, who are probably to be relied on; the Chinese put it in 1162. 1187 does not appear to be a date of special import.



## CHAP. XLVIII. CHINGHIS KAAH AND PRESTER JOHN

ance in his history. His inauguration as sovereign under the name of Chinghiz Kaan was in 1202 according to the Persian authorities, in 1206 according to the Chinese.

NOTE 2. — Several historians, among others Abulfaraj, represent Chinghiz as having married a daughter of Aung-Khan; and this is current among some of the medieval European writers, such as Vincent of Beauvais. It is also adopted by Petis de la Croix in his history of Chinghiz, apparently from a comparatively late Turkish historian; and both D'Herbelot and St. Martin state the same; but there seems to be no foundation for it in the best authorities, either Persian or Chinese (see *Abulfaragius*, p. 285; *Speculum Historiale*, Bk. XXIX. ch. lxxix; *Hist. of Genghis Can*, p. 29; and *Golden Horde*, p. 61-2). But there is a real story at the basis of Polo's, which seems to be this. About 1202, when Aung Khan and Chinghiz were still acting in professed alliance, a double union was proposed between Aung Khan's daughter Jaur Bigi and Chinghiz's son Juji, and between Chinghiz's daughter Kijin Bigi and Togru'l's grandson Kush Buka. From certain circumstances this union fell through, and this was one of the circumstances which opened the breach between the two chiefs. There were, however, several marriages between the families. (*Erdmann*, 283; others are quoted under Chap. ix., Note 2.)

## CHAPTER XLVIII

### HOW CHINGHIS MUSTERED HIS PEOPLE TO MARCH AGAINST PRESTER JOHN

WHEN Chinghis Kaan heard the brutal message that Prester John had sent him, such rage seized him that his heart came nigh to bursting within him, for he was a man of a very lofty spirit. At last he spoke, and that so loud that all who were present could hear him: "Never more might he be prince if he took not revenge for the brutal message of Prester John, and such revenge that insult never in this world was so dearly paid for. And before long Prester John should know whether he were his self or no!"

So then he mustered all his forces, and levied such a host as never before was seen or heard of, sending word to Prester John to be on his defence. And when Prester

John had sure tidings that Chinghis was really coming against him with such a multitude, he still professed to treat it as a jest and a trifle, for, quoth he, "these be no soldiers." Natheless he marshalled his forces and mustered his people, and made great preparations, in order that if Chinghis did come, he might take him and put him to death. In fact he marshalled such an host of many different nations that it was a world's wonder.

And so both sides gat them ready to battle. And why should I make a long story of it? Chinghis Kaan with all his host arrived at a vast and beautiful plain which was called TANDUC, belonging to Prester John, and there he pitched his camp; and so great was the multitude of his people that it was impossible to number them. And when he got tidings that Prester John was coming, he rejoiced greatly, for the place afforded a fine and ample battle-ground, so he was right glad to tarry for him there, and greatly longed for his arrival.

But now leave we Chinghis and his host, and let us return to Prester John and his people.

---

## CHAPTER XLIX.

### HOW PRESTER JOHN MARCHED TO MEET CHINGHIS.

Now the story goes that when Prester John became aware that Chinghis with his host was marching against him, he went forth to meet him with all his forces, and advanced until he reached the same plain of Tanduc, and pitched his camp over against that of Chinghis Kaan at a distance of 20 miles. And then both armies remained at rest for two days that they might be fresher and heartier for battle.

So when the two great hosts were pitched on the plains

moned before him his astrologers, both Christians and Saracens, and desired them to let him know which of the two hosts would gain the battle, his own or Prester John's. The Saracens tried to ascertain, but were unable to give a true answer; the Christians however did give a true answer, and showed manifestly beforehand how the event should be. For they got a cane and split it lengthwise, and laid one half on this side and one half on that, allowing no one to touch the pieces. And one piece of cane they called *Chinghis Kaan*, and the other piece they called *Prester John*. And then they said to Chinghis: "Now mark! and you will see the event of the battle, and who shall have the best of it; for whose cane soever shall get above the other, to him shall victory be." He replied that he would fain see it, and bade them begin. Then the Christian astrologers read a Psalm out of the Psalter, and went through other incantations. And lo! whilst all were beholding, the cane that bore the name of Chinghis Kaan, without being touched by anybody, advanced to the other that bore the name of Prester John, and got on the top of it. When the Prince saw that, he was greatly delighted, and seeing how in this matter he found the Christians to tell the truth, he always treated them with great respect, and held them for men of truth for ever after.<sup>2</sup>

NOTE 1.—Polo in the preceding chapter has stated that this place of Tanduc was in Prester John's country. He plainly regards it as identical with the Tanduc of which he speaks more particularly in Ch. III. as belonging to Prester John's descendants, and which must be located near the Chinese wall. He is no doubt wrong in placing the battle there. Sanang Setzen puts the battle between the two, the action which he mentions, "at the outflow of the Union near Kharakchin." The same action is placed by Hemmell's authorities at Kharakchin, by P. Hyacinth at Kharakchin Schait, by Erdmann after him at the vicinity of Hulan-Barkat and Kharakchin, while Ritter says it is on the borders of the Church or Mochins. All this points to the vicinity of Bur-Nur and Hulan of Kharakchin, the place of the Chinese wall. But this was not the final battle of 1219, when the Christians were

**NOTE 2.**—A Tartar divination by twigs, but different from that here employed, is older than Herodotus, who ascribes it to the Scythians. We hear of one something like the last among the Alans, and (from Tacitus) among the Germans. The words of Hosea (iv. 12), "My people ask counsel at their stocks, and their staff declareth unto them," are thus explained by Theophylactus: "They stuck up a couple of sticks, whilst murmuring certain charms and incantations; the sticks then, by the operation of devils, direct or indirect, would fall over, and the direction of their fall was noted," &c. The Chinese method of divination comes still nearer to that in the text. It is conducted by tossing in the air two symmetrical pieces of wood or bamboo of a peculiar form. It is described by Mendoza, and more particularly, with illustrations, by Doolittle.

But Rubruquis would seem to have witnessed nearly the same process that Polo describes. He reprehends the conjuring practices of the Nestorian priests among the Mongols, who seem to have tried to rival the indigenous *Kāms* or Medicine-men. Visiting the Lady Kuktai, a Christian Queen of Mangu Kaan, who was ill, he says: "The Nestorians were repeating certain verses, I know not what (they said it was part of a Psalm), over two twigs which were brought into contact in the hands of two men. The monk stood by during the operation". (p. 326). Petis de la Croix quotes from Thévenot's travels a similar mode of divination as much used, before a fight, among the Barbary corsairs. Two men sit on the deck facing one another and each holding two arrows by the points, and hitching the notches of each pair of arrows into the other pair. Then the ship's writer reads a certain Arabic formula, and it is pretended that whilst this goes on, the two sets of arrows, of which one represents the Turks and the other the Christians, struggle together in spite of the resistance of the holders, and finally one rises over the other. This is perhaps the divination by arrows which is prohibited in the Koran.

P. della Valle describes the same process, conducted by a Mahomedan conjuror of Aleppo: "By his incantations he made the four points of the arrows come together without any movement of the holders, and by the way the points spontaneously placed themselves, obtained answers to interrogatories."

And Mr. Jaeschke writes from Lahaul: "There are many different ways of divination practised among the Buddhists; and that also mentioned by Marco Polo is known to our Lama, but in a slightly different use of two arrows instead of a cane split up. wherefore th

...the number of a great host at Luchana.

As regards Chinghiz's respect for the Christians there are other stories. Abulfaragius has said about Chinghiz seeing in a dream a religious person who promised him success. He told the dream to his wife, Aung Khan's daughter, who said the description answered to that of the bishop who used to visit her father. Chinghiz then enquired for a bishop among the Uigur Christians in his camp, and they indicated Mar Denha. Chinghiz thenceforward was milder towards the Christians, and showed them many distinctions (p. 285). Vincent of Beauvais also speaks of Rabbanta, a Nestorian monk, who lived in the confidence of Chinghiz's wife, daughter of "the Christian King David or Prester John," and who used by divination to make many revelations to the Tartars. We have already said that there seems no ground for assigning a daughter of Aung Khan as wife to Chinghiz. But there was a niece of the former, named Abika, among the wives of Chinghiz. And Rashiduddin *does* relate a dream of the Kaan's in relation to her. But it was to the effect that he was divinely commanded to give her away; and this he did next morning:

(*Rawlins*, *Herod.* IV. 67; *Amm. Marcell.* XXXI. 2; *Delvie*, *Disq. Magic.* 558; *Mendoza*, *Hak. Soc.* I. 47; *Doolittle*, 435-6; *Hist. of Genghiscan*, p. 52-53; *P. della F.* II. 865-6; *Vigne*, I. 46; *D'Ohsson*, I. 418 19.)

## CHAPTER I.

### THE BATTLE BETWEEN CHINGHIS KAAN AND PRESTER JOHN.

AND after both sides had rested well those two days, they armed for the fight and engaged in desperate combat; and it was the greatest battle that ever was seen. The numbers that were slain on both sides were very great, but in the end Chinghis Kaan obtained the victory. And in the battle Prester John was slain. And from that time forward, day by day, his kingdom passed into the hands of Chinghis Kaan till the whole was conquered.

I may tell you that Chinghis Kaan reigned six years after this battle, engaged continually in conquest, and

taking many a province and city and stronghold. At the end of those six years he went against a certain state that was called CAJU, and there he was shot with an arrow in the knee, so that he died of his wound. A great pity it was, for he was a valiant man and a wise.

I will now tell you who reigned after Chinghis and then about the manners and customs of the Tartars.

NOTE 1.—Chinghiz in fact survived Aung Khan some 24 years, dying during his third expedition against Tangut, 18th August, 1227, aged 66. Sanang Setzen says that Kurbeljin Goa Khatun, the beautiful Queen of Tangut, who had passed into the tents of the conqueror, did him some bodily mischief (it is not said what), and then went and drowned herself in the Karamuren (or Hoang-ho), which thenceforth was called by the Mongols the *Khdtün-gol*, or Lady's River, a name which it in fact still bears. Carpini relates that Chinghiz was killed by lightning. The Persian and Chinese historians, however, agree in speaking of his death as natural. Gaubil calls the place of his death Lou-pan, which he says was in lat. 38°. Rashiduddin calls it Leung-Shan, which appears to be the mountain range still so called in the heart of Shensi.

The name of the place before which Polo represents him as mortally wounded is very variously given. According to Gaubil, Chinghiz was in reality dangerously wounded by an arrow-shot at the siege of Taitongfu in 1212. And it is possible that Polo's account of his death before *Caagin* (as I prefer the reading), arose out of a confusion between this circumstance and those of the death of *Mangu Kaan*, which is said to have occurred at the assault of HOCHAU in Ssechuen, a name which Polo would write *Caagin*, or nearly so. Abulfaragius specifically says that Mangu Kaan died *by an arrow*; though it is true that other authors say he died of disease, and Haiton that he was drowned; all which shows how excusable were Polo's errors as to events occurring 50 to 100 years before his time. (See *Oppert's Presbyter Johannes*, p. 76; *De Mailla*, IX. 275; and note; *Gaubil*, 18, 50, 52, 121; *Erdmann*, 443; *Ss. Setzen*, 103.)

## CHAPTER LI.

OF THOSE WHO DID REIGN AFTER CHINGHIS KAAN, AND OF THE CUSTOMS OF THE TARTARS.

Now the next that reigned after Chinghis Kaan, their first Son, was CUY KAAN, and the third Prince was BARU

Chinghis, the first of the Great Kaans, the first of the Great Emperors of the East, who is the most powerful and the most potent than any of the five that were before him; in fact, if you were to take all those five together, they might not be so powerful as he is. Nay, I will say yet more; for if you were to put together all the Christians in the world, with their Emperors and their Kings, the whole of these Christians,—aye, and throw in the Saracens to boot,—would not have such power, or be able to do so much as this Cublay, who is the Lord of all the Tartars in the world, those of the Levant and of the Ponent included; for these are all his liegemen and subjects. I mean to show you all about this great power of his in this book of ours.

You should be told also that all the Grand Kaans, and all the descendants of Chinghis their first Lord, are carried to a mountain that is called ALTAY to be interred. Where-soever the Sovereign may die, he is carried to his burial in that mountain with his predecessors; no matter, if the place of his death were 100 days' journey distant, thither must he be carried to his burial.

Let me tell you a strange thing too. When they are carrying the body of any Emperor to be buried with the others, the convoy that goes with the body doth put to the sword all whom they fall in with on the road, saying: "Go and wait upon your Lord in the other world." For they do in sooth believe that all such as they slay in this manner do go to serve their Lord in the other world. They do the same too with horses; for when the Emperor dies, they kill all his best horses, in order that he may have the use of them in the other world, as they believe. And I tell you as a certain truth, that when Mongon Khan died, more than 20,000 persons, who chanced to meet the body on its way, were slain in the manner I have told.

NOTE 1.—Before parting with Chinghis let me point out what has not to my knowledge been suggested before, that the name of “*Cambuscan bold*” in Chaucer’s tale is only a corruption of the name of Chinghiz. The name of the conqueror appears in Fr. Ricold as *Camius can*, from which the transition to *Cambuscan* presents no difficulty. *Camius* was, I suppose, a clerical corruption out of *Canjus* or *Chanis*. In the chronicle of St. Antonino, however, we have him called “*Chingiscan rectius Tamgius Cam*” (XIX. c. 8). If this is not merely the usual blunder of *t* for *c*, it presents a curious analogy to the form *Tankis Khan* always used by Ibn Batuta. I do not know the origin of the latter, unless it was suggested by *tankis* (Ar.) “Turning upside down.” (See *Pereg. Quat.* p. 119; *J. B.* III. 22, &c.)

NOTE 2.—Polo’s history here is inadmissible. He introduces into the list of the supreme Kaans *Batu* who was only Khan of Kipchak (the Golden Horde), and *Hulaku* who was Khan of Persia, whilst he omits *Okkodai* the immediate successor of Chinghiz. It is also remarkable that he uses the form *Alacou* here instead of *Alai* as elsewhere; nor does he seem to mean the same person, for he was quite well aware that *Alai* was Lord of the Levant, who sent ambassadors to the Great Kaan Cublay, and could not therefore be one of his predecessors. The real succession ran: 1. Chinghiz; 2. Okkodai; 3. Kuyuk; 4. Mangku; 5. Kúblai.

There are quite as great errors in the history of Haiton, who had probably greater advantages in this respect than Marco. And I may note that in Teixeira’s abridgment of Mirkhond *Hulaku* is made to succeed *Mangu Kaan* on the throne of Chinghiz. (*Relaciones*, p. 338.)

NOTE 3.—The *ALTAI* here certainly does not mean the Great South Siberian Range to which the name is now applied. The names *Altai* and *Altan-Khan*, appears sometimes to be applied by Sanang Setzen to the Khingan of the Chinese, or range running north of and parallel to, the Great Wall near Kalgan. And in reference to this very matter of the burial of Chinghiz, he describes the place as “the district of Yeke Utek, between the shady side of the Altai-Khan and the sunny side of the Kentei-Khan.”

According to Rashiduddin, Chinghiz was buried at a place called *Bürkân Kaldun* (“God’s Hill”), or *Yekeh Kürük* (“The Great Sacred or Tabooed Place”); in another passage he calls the spot *Büdaq Undür* (which means, I fancy, the same as *Bürkân Kaldun*), near the River Selenga. *Burkân Kaldun* is often mentioned by Sanang Setzen, and Pallas speaks of *Burgin Galdat* as the mountain in which the Onon rises. Quatremère seems to demonstrate the identity of this place with the mountain called by Pallas (and Timkowski) *Khanpella*. This is a lofty mountain near Urga, covered with dense forest, and is indeed the last lofty mountain reached in travelling from Peking. It is still held sacred by the Mongols, and guarded from access, though the road



## CHAP. LII. THE CUSTOMS OF THE TARTARS.

tion of Chinghiz's grave seems to be extinct. As the *Kantai*, mentioned in the quotation from S. Setzen, is immediately north of the Khan-oolla, this agrees fairly with his statement on the supposition that the Khan-oolla is the Altai of the same quotation from him. The Khan-oolla (oola means mountain) appears also to be the *Han* mountain which Mongol chiefs claiming descent from Chinghiz named to Gaubil as the burial place of that conqueror.

Erdmann relates, apparently after Rashiduddin, that Chinghiz was buried at the foot of a tree which had taken his fancy on a hunting expedition, and which he had then pointed out as the place where he desired to be interred. It was then conspicuous, but afterwards the adjoining trees shot up so rapidly, that a dense wood covered the whole locality, and it became impossible to identify the spot. (*Q. R.* 117 *seqq.*; *Timk.* I. 115 *seqq.*, II. 475-6; *San. Setz.* 103, 114-15, 108-109; *Gaubil.* 54; *Erd.* 444.)

NOTE 4.—Rashiduddin relates, that in carrying Chinghiz to his burial, the escort slew all whom they met, and that forty noble and beautiful girls were despatched to serve him in the other world, as well as superb horses. As Mangu Kaan died in the heart of China, any attempt to carry out the barbarous rule in his case would involve great slaughter. (*Erd.* 443; *D'Ohsson*, I. 381, II. 13; and see *Cathay*, 507-8.)

Sanang Setzen ignores these barbarities. He describes the body of Chinghiz as removed to his native land on a two-wheeled waggon, the whole host escorting it, and wailing as they went: "And Kiluken Bahadur of the Sunid Tribe (one of the Khan's old comrades) lifted up his voice and sang:—

\* Whom Thou didst swoop like a Falcon: A hand-bag waggon now trundles thee off;  
O My King!  
Hast Thou in truth then forsaken thy wife and thy children and the Diet of thy People  
O My King!  
Circling in pride like an Eagle whilom Thou didst lead us,  
O My King!  
But now Thou hast stumbled and fallen, like an unbroken Colt,  
O My King!"—p. 108.

## CHAPTER LII.

### CONCERNING THE CUSTOMS OF THE TARTARS.

Now that we have begun to speak of the Tartars, I have plenty to tell you on that subject.

The Tartar custom is to spend the winter in warm

plains where they find good pasture for their cattle, whilst in summer they betake themselves to a cool climate along the mountains and valleys, where water is to be found as well as woods and pastures.

Their houses are circular, and are made of wands covered with felts.<sup>1</sup> These are carried along with them whithersoever they go; for the wands are so strongly bound together, as well as so well combined, that the frame can be made very light. Whenever they erect these huts the door is always to the south. They also have waggons covered with black felt so efficaciously that no rain can get in. These are drawn by oxen and camels, and the women and children travel in them.<sup>2</sup> The women do the buying and selling, and whatever is necessary to provide for the husband and household; for the men all lead the life of gentlemen, troubling themselves about nothing but hunting and hawking, and looking after their goshawks and falcons, unless it be the practice of warlike exercises.

They live on the milk and meat which their herds supply, and on the produce of the chase; and they eat all kinds of flesh, including that of horses and dogs, and Pharaoh's rats, of which last there are great numbers in burrows on those plains.<sup>3</sup> Their drink is mare's milk.

They are very careful not to meddle with each other's wives, and will not do so on any account, holding that to be an evil and abominable thing. The women too are very good and loyal to their husbands, and notable housewives withal.<sup>4</sup> [Ten or twenty of them will dwell together in charming peace or unity, and you never shall hear an ill word among them.]

The marriage customs of Tartars are as follows. Any man may take a hundred wives as he so please, and if he be able to keep them. But the first wife is ever held most in honour, and as the most legitimate [and the same applies to the sons whom she may bear]. The husband gives a marriage payment to his wife's mother, and the

wife brings nothing to her husband. They have more children than other people, because they have so many wives. They may marry their cousins, and if a father dies, his son may take any of the wives, his own mother always excepted; that is to say the eldest son may do this, but no other. A man may also take the wife of his own brother after the latter's death. Their weddings are celebrated with great ado.'

NOTE 1.—The word here in the G. T. is "*fenues*," which seems usually to mean *ropes*; and in fact Pauthier's text reads: "*Il ont mesons de verges et les cueurent de cordes*." Ramusio's text has *feltroni*, and both Müller and the Latin of the S. G. have *filtra*. This is certainly the right reading. But whether *fenues* was ever used as a form of *feltrones* (as *fenues* means *peltry*) I cannot discover. Perhaps some words have dropped out. A good description of a Kirghiz hut (35 feet in diameter), and exactly corresponding to Polo's account, will be found in Atkinson's '*Siberia*,' and another in Vámbéry's *Travels*. How comfortable and civilized the aspect of such a hut may be, can be seen also in Burnes's account of a Turkoman dwelling of this kind. This description of hut or tent is common to nearly all the nomade tribes of Central Asia. The trellis-work forming the skeleton of the tent-walls is (at least among the *Tushmans*) loosely pivoted, so as to draw out and compress like "lazy-tongs."

Rubruquis, Pallas, Timkowski, and others, notice the custom of turning the door to the south; the reason is obvious. (*Atkinson*, 285; *Vámb.* 316; *Burnes*, III. 51; *Conolly*, I. 96.)

NOTE 2.—Æschylus already knows the

"wandering Scyths who dwell  
In latticed huts high-poised on easy wheels."

—*From. Vind.* 709-10.

And long before him Hesiod says Phineus was carried by the Harpies—

"To the Land of the Milk-fed nations, whose houses are waggons."

—*Hesiod.* vii. 3-5.

"On the waggon," says Ibn Batuta, "is put a sort of pavilion of round-laced together with narrow thongs. It is very light, and is covered with felt or cloth, and has latticed windows, so that the person inside can look out without being seen. He can change his position at pleasure, sleeping or eating, reading or writing, during the journey." These waggons were sometimes of animal skin. Ibn Batuta declares that he measured between the wheels the feet of one and found the interval to be 30 feet. The axle was like a single wheel, and the iron wheels were

to the waggon, 11 abreast (see opposite cut). He describes the carts as not usually taken to pieces, but carried all standing. The waggon just mentioned carried a hut of 30 feet diameter, for it projected beyond the wheels at least 5 feet on either side. In fact, Carpini says explicitly "Some of the huts are speedily taken to pieces and put up again; such are packed on the beasts. Others cannot be taken to pieces, but are carried bodily on the waggons." The carts that were used to transport the Tartar valuables were covered with felt soaked in tallow or ewe's milk to make them waterproof. (*J. B.* II. 381-2; *Rub.* 221; *Carp.* 616.)

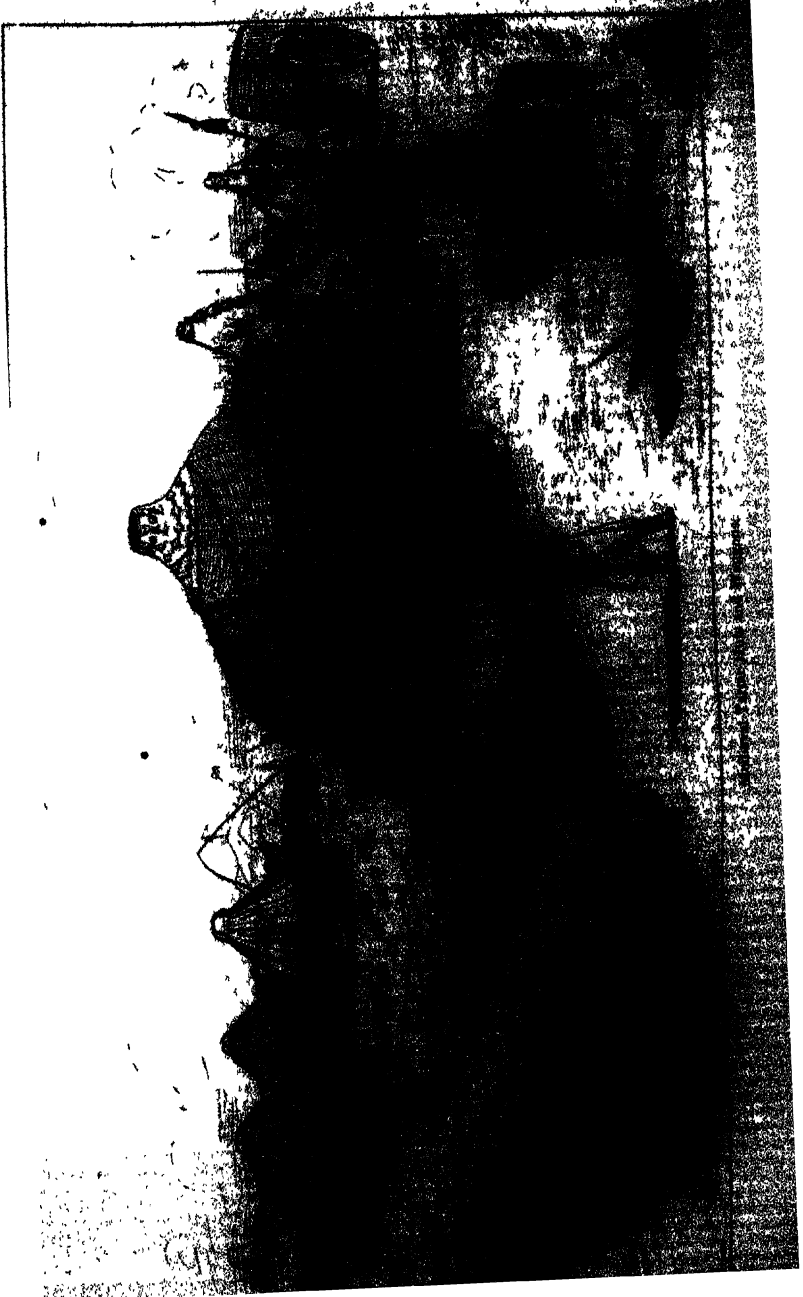
The words of Herodotus, speaking generally of the Scythians, apply perfectly to the Mongol hordes under Chinghiz: "Having neither cities nor forts, and carrying their dwellings with them wherever they go; accustomed moreover, one and all, to shoot from horseback, and living not by husbandry but on their cattle, their waggons the only houses they possess, how can they fail of being unconquerable?" (IV. 36, *Rawlins*.)

NOTE 3.—*Pharaoh's Rat* was properly the Gerboa of Arabia and North Africa, which the Arabs also regard as a dainty. There is a kindred animal in Siberia called *Alactaga*, and a kind of Kangaroo-rat (probably the same) is mentioned as very abundant on the Mongolian Steppe. There is also the *Zieselmaus* of Pallas, a Dormouse, I believe, which he says the Kalmaks, even of distinction, count a delicacy, especially cooked in sour milk. "They eat not only the flesh of all their different kinds of cattle, including horses and camels, but also that of many wild animals which other nations eschew, *e. g.* marmots and *sieselmice*, beavers, badgers, otters, and lynxes, leaving none untouched except the dog and weasel kind, and also (unless very hard pressed) the flesh of the fox and the wolf." (*Pallas, Samml.* I. 128; also *Rubr.* 229-30.)

NOTE 4.—"Their wives are chaste; nor does one ever hear any talk of their immodesty," says Carpini;—no Boccaccian and Chaucerian stories.

NOTE 5.—"The Mongols are not prohibited from having a plurality of wives; the first manages the domestic concerns, and is the most respected" (*Timk.* II. 310). Naturally Polygamy is not so general among the Mongols as when Asia lay at their feet. The Buraets, who seem to retain the old Mongol customs in great completeness, are polygamists and have as many wives as they choose. Polygamy is also very prevalent among the Yakuts, whose lineage seems to be Eastern Turk (*Ritter*, III. 125; *Erman*, II. 346.)

Of the custom that entitled the son on succeeding to take such a pleasure of his deceased father's wives, we find mention in the *Prologue*, ch. xvii. note 2, and many instances in other Mongol Histories. The same custom is mentioned by Herodotus of the Scythians (IV. 78). A number of instances are given by Comte de Maistre in his *Recherches sur les Mœurs et l'Esprit des Nations* (Paris, 1795), and in the *Revue de la Littérature* (Paris, 1800).



the custom of taking a deceased brother's wives is now obsolete, but that a proverb preserves its memory (II. 656):

"The Kalin is a present which the Bridegroom or his parents make to the parents of the Bride. All the Pagan nations of Siberia have this custom; they differ only in what constitutes the present, whether money or cattle." (*Gmelin*, I. 29; see also *Erman*, II. 348.)

## CHAPTER LIII.

### CONCERNING THE GOD OF THE TARTARS.

THIS is the fashion of their religion. [They say there is a Most High God of Heaven, whom they worship daily with thurible and incense, but they pray to Him only for health of mind and body. But] they have [also] a certain [other] god of theirs called NATIGAY, and they say he is the God of the Earth, who watches over their children, cattle, and crops. They show him great worship and honour, and every man hath a figure of him in his house, made of felt and cloth; and they also make in the same manner images of his wife and children. The wife they put on the left hand, and the children in front. And when they eat, they take the fat of the meat and grease the god's mouth withal, as well as the mouths of his wife and children. Then they take of the broth and sprinkle it before the door of the house; and that done, they deem that their god and his family have had their share of the dinner.<sup>1</sup>

Their drink is mare's milk, prepared in such a way that you would take it for white wine; and a right good drink it is, called by them *Kemiz*.<sup>2</sup>

The clothes of the wealthy Tartars are for the most part of gold and silk stuffs, lined with costly furs, such as sable and ermine, vair and fox-skin, in the richest fashion.

## CHAP. LIII. OBJECTS OF TARTAR WORSHIP.

NOTE 1.—There is no reference here to Buddhism, which was then of recent introduction among the Mongols; indeed at the end of the chapter Polo speaks of their new adoption of the Chinese idolatry, *i.e.* Buddhism. We may add here that the Buddhism of the Mongols decayed and became practically extinct after their expulsion from China (1368-9). The old Shamanism then apparently revived; nor was it till 1577 that the great reconversion of Mongolia to Lamaism began. This reconversion is the most prominent event in the Mongol history of Sanang Setzen, whose great-grandfather Khutuktu Setzen, Prince of the Ordos, was a chief agent in the movement.

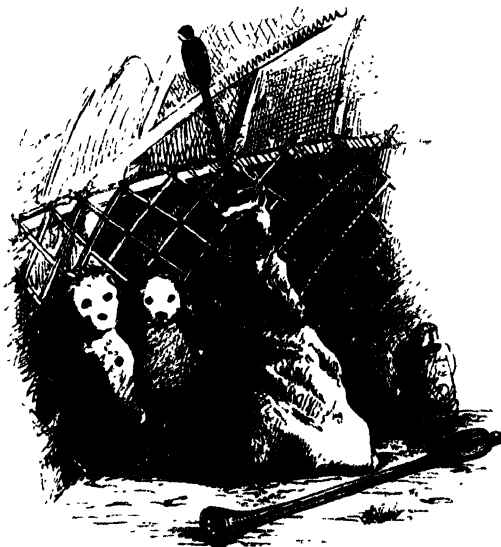
The Supreme Good Spirit appears to have been called by the Mongols *Tengri* (Heaven), and *Ehormuzda*, and is identified by Schmidt with the Persian Hormuzd. In Buddhist times he became identified with Indra.

Plano Carpini's account of this matter is very like Marco's: "They believe in One God, the Maker of all things, visible and invisible, and the Distributor of good and evil in this world; but they worship Him not with prayers or praises or any kind of service. Notwithstanding they have certain idols of felt, imitating the human face, and having underneath the face something resembling teats; these they place on either side the door. These they believe to be the guardians of the flocks, from whom they have the boons of milk and increase. Others they fabricate of bits of silk, and these are highly honoured; . . . and whenever they begin to eat or drink, they first offer these idols a portion of their food or drink."

The account agrees generally with what we are told of the original Shamanism of the Tunguses, which recognizes a Supreme Power over all, and a small number of potent spirits called *Onkot*. These spirits among the Buryats are called, according to one author, *Angait* or *Nogait*, and according to Erman *Ohgaitu*. In the form of this same word, *Angait*, *Onkot*, *Onged*, *Ongetui*, we are enabled to trace the *Natigay* of Polo. The modern representative of this Shamanist *Lar* is still found among the Buryats, and is thus described by Pallas under the name of *Immugaijin*: "He is honoured as the tutelary god of the sheep and other cattle. Properly the divinity consists of *two* figures, hanging side by side, one of whom represents the god's wife. These two figures are merely a pair of lanky flat bolsters with the upper part shaped into a round disk, and the body hung with a long woolly fleece; eyes, nose, breasts, and navel, being indicated by leather knobs stitched on. The male figure commonly has at his girdle the foot-ropes with which horses at pasture are fettered, whilst the female, which is sometimes accompanied by smaller figures representing her children, has all sorts of little nicknacks and sewing implements." Galsang Czomboyev, a recent Russo-Mongol writer already quoted, says also; "Among the Buryats, in the middle of the hut and place of honour, is the *Dsaigaghi* or 'Chief Creator of Fortune.' At the door is the *Emelgelji*, the Tutelary of the Herds and Young Cattle, made of sheep-skins. Outside the hut is

the *Chandaghatu*, a name implying that the idol was formed of a white hare-skin, the Tutelary of the Chase and perhaps of War. All these have been expelled by Buddhism except *Dsaigachi*, who is called *Tengeri*, and introduced among the Buddhist divinities."

NOTE 2.—KIMIZ or KUMIZ, the habitual drink of the Mongols, as it still is of most of the nomades of Asia. It is thus made. Fresh mare's milk is put in a well-seasoned bottle-necked vessel of horse-skin; a little *kurit* (see note 5, ch. liv.) or some sour cow's milk is added; and when acetous fermentation is commencing it is violently churned with a peculiar staff which constantly stands in the vessel. This



Tartar Idols and Kumis Churn.

interrupts fermentation and introduces a quantity of air into the liquid. It is customary for visitors who may drop in to give a turn or two at the churn-stick. After three or four days the drink is ready.

Kumiz keeps long; it is wonderfully tonic and nutritious, and it is said that it has cured many persons threatened with consumption. The tribes using it are said to be remarkably free from pulmonary disease; and indeed I understand there is a regular *Galactopathic* establishment somewhere in the province of Orenburg for treating pulmonary patients with Kumiz diet.

It has a peculiar fore and after-taste which, it is said, everybody does not like. Yet I have found no confession of a dislike to Kumiz. Rubruquis tells us it is pungent on the tongue, like *vinum raspei* (*vin rapté* of the French) whilst you are drinking it, but leaves behind a pleasant flavour like milk of almonds. It makes a man's inside feel very cozy,



he adds, even turning a weak head, and is strongly diuretic. To this last statement, however, a modern report is in direct contradiction. The Greeks and other Oriental Christians considered it a sort of denial of the faith to drink Kumiz. On the other hand the Mahomedan converts from the nomade tribes seem to have adhered to the use of Kumiz even when strict in abstinence from wine ; and it was indulged in by the early Mamelukes as a public solemnity. Excess on such an occasion killed Bibars Bundukdari, who was passionately fond of this liquor.

The intoxicating power of Kumiz varies according to the *brew*. The more advanced is the vinous fermentation the less acid is the taste and the more it sparkles. The effect, however, is always slight and transitory, and leaves no unpleasant sensation, whilst it produces a strong tendency to refreshing sleep. If its good qualities amount to half what are ascribed to it by Dr. W. F. Dahl, from whom we derive some of these particulars, it must be the pearl of all beverages. "With the nomads it is the drink of all from the suckling upwards, it is the solace of age and illness, and the greatest of treats to all."

There was a special kind called *Kwa Kwa*, which is mentioned both by Rubrugi and in the history of W. G. O. It seems to have been strained and clarified. The modern preparation is quite from Kuniz of which Pallas gives a detailed account (*J. d. l'Ét. de Kwa* in *Bull. de l'Acad. Sci. de l'Emp. de Pétersbourg*, Paris, 1859, p. 31; *Mémoires de l'Acad. Sci. de l'Emp. de Pétersbourg*, 1857, 8, 335; *Ges. Hochsch. u. d. Wiss. u. d. Kunst. in St. Petersburg*, 1857, 1, 2, 102).

The more and drunker people are, the more inclined to imitate ancient authors. But the most effective evidence is provided by Herodotus. "The more" rather popularly, but in a wooden cask about which the blood flows, grows up in the neck, started round. That which rises to the top is the best food for the sick, can be best spared; the under portion is of little use, and is cast away, as is the vomit beyond the chamber of Cleonoe. . . . They eat of the flesh, and other flesh, mare's milk, cheese, mare's milk, . . . *καὶ τὸ ἀπὸ τοῦ ξύλου* which they have a part, . . . of the best food. . . . Perhaps Herodotus was mistaken about the wooden tub. At least all modern attempts to use anything but the ordinary kind of milk are ridiculous. Passing to his narrative of the mission of Hanes and Maresius to Andros, says the Huns brought them a drink made from *barley* which they called *kápos*. The barley was, no doubt, a misapprehension of his. (Herod. IV. 2, in *Racine; Strabo*, VII. 4. 6. *Excerpta Legationum*, by Corp. Hist. Byzant. I. 55.)

## CHAPTER LIV.

## CONCERNING THE TARTAR CUSTOMS OF WAR.

ALL their harness of war is excellent and costly. Their arms are bow and arrows, sword and mace; but above all the bow, for they are capital archers, indeed the best that are known. On their backs they wear armour of cuir-bouly prepared from buffalo and other hides, which is very strong.<sup>1</sup> They are excellent soldiers and passing valiant in battle. They are also more capable of hardship than other nations; for many a time, if need be, they will go for a month without any supply of food, living only on the milk of their mares and on such game as their bows may win them. Their horses also will subsist entirely on the grass of the plains, so that there is no need to carry store of barley or straw or oats; and they are very docile to their riders. These, in case of need, will abide on horseback the livelong night, armed at all points, while the horse will be continually grazing.

Of all troops in the world these are they which endure the greatest hardship and fatigue, and which cost the least; and they are the best of all for making wide conquests of country. And this you will perceive from what you have heard and shall hear in this book; and (as a fact) there can be no manner of doubt that now they are the masters of the biggest half of the world. Their troops are admirably ordered in the manner that I shall now relate.

You see, when a Tartar prince goes forth to war, he takes with him, say, 100,000 horse. Well, he appoints an officer to every ten men, one to every hundred, one to every thousand, and one to every ten thousand, so that his own orders have to be given to ten persons only, and each of these ten persons has to pass the orders only to other ten, and so on; no one having to give orders to more than ten. And every one in turn is responsible only to the

officer immediately over him ; and the discipline and order that comes of this method is marvellous, for they are a people very obedient to their chiefs. Further, they call the corps of 100,000 men a *Tuc* ; that of 10,000 they call a *Toman* ; the thousand they call . . . ; the hundred *Guz* ; the ten . . . .<sup>2</sup> And when the army is on the march they have always 200 horsemen, very well mounted, who are sent a distance of two marches in advance to reconnoitre, and these always keep a-head. They have a similar party detached in the rear, and on either flank, so that there is a good look-out kept on all sides against a surprise. When they are going on a distant expedition they take no gear with them except two leather bottles for milk, and a little earthenware pot to cook their meat in, and a little tent to shelter them from rain.<sup>3</sup> And in case of great urgency they will ride ten days on end without . . . a fire or taking a meal. On such an occasion they will sustain themselves on the blood of their horses, opening a vein and letting the blood jet into their mouths, drinking till they have had enough, and then staunching it.

They also have milk dried into a kind of paste to carry with them ; and when they need food they put this in water, and beat it up till it dissolves, and then drink it. [It is prepared in this way : they boil the milk, and when the rich part floats on the top they skim it into another vessel, and of that they make butter ; for the milk will not become solid till this is removed. Then they put the milk in the sun to dry. And when they go on an expedition, every man takes some ten pounds of this dried milk with him. And of a morning he will take a half pound of it and put it in his leather bottle, with as much water as he pleases. So, as he rides along, the milk-paste and the water in the bottle get well churned together into a kind of pap, and that makes his dinner.]

When they come to an engagement with the enemy, they will gain the victory in this fashion. [They never let

themselves get into a regular medley, but keep perpetually riding round and shooting into the enemy. And] as they do not count it any shame to run away in battle, they will [sometimes pretend to] do so, and in running away they turn in the saddle and shoot hard and strong at the foe, and in this way make great havoc. Their horses are trained so perfectly that they will double hither and thither, just like a dog, in a way that is quite astonishing. Thus they fight to as good purpose in running away as if they stood and faced the enemy, because of the vast volleys of arrows that they shoot in this way, turning round upon their pursuers, who are fancying that they have won the battle. But when the Tartars see that they have killed and wounded a good many horses and men, they wheel round bodily, and return to the charge in perfect order, and with loud cries; and in a very short time the enemy are routed. In truth they are stout and valiant soldiers, and inured to war. And you perceive that it is just when the enemy sees them run, and imagines that he has gained the battle, that he has in reality lost it; for the Tartars wheel round in a moment when they judge the right time has come. And after this fashion they have won many a fight.<sup>6</sup>

All this that I have been telling you is true of the manners and customs of the genuine Tartars. But I must add also that in these days they are greatly degenerated; for those who are settled in Cathay have taken up the practices of the Idolaters of the country, and have abandoned their own institutions; whilst those who have settled in the Levant have adopted the customs of the Saracens.<sup>7</sup>

NOTE 1.—The bow was the characteristic weapon of the Tartars, insomuch that the Armenian historians often call them "The Archers" (*St. Martin*, II. 133). "CUIRBOULY, leather softened by boiling, in which it took any form or impression required, and then hardened" (*Wright's Dict.*). The English adventurer among the Tartars, whose account of them is given by Archbishop Ivo of Narbonne, in *Matthew Paris* (*sup.* 1243), says: "De coriis bullitis sibi arma levia quidem, sed

# CHAP. LIV. THE TARTAR CUSTOMS OF WAR.

tamen impenetrabilia coaptarunt." This armour is particularly described by Plano Carpini (p. 685).

NOTE 2.—M. Pauthier has judiciously pointed out the omissions that have occurred here, perhaps owing to Rusticiano's not properly catching the foreign terms applied to the various grades. In the G. Text the passage runs: "*Et sachiés que les cent mille est apellé un Tut (read tuc) et les dix mille un Toman, et les por millier et por centenier et por desme.*" In Pauthier's (uncorrected) text one of the missing words is supplied: "*Et appellent les C.M. un Tuc; et les X.M. un Toman; et un millier Guz por centenier et por disenier.*" The blanks he supplies thus from Abulghazi: "*et un millier [un Miny]; Guz por centenier et [Un] por disenier.*" The words supplied are Turki, but so is the *Guz*, which appears already in Pauthier's text, whilst *Toman* and *Tuc* are common to Turki and Mongol. The latter word, *Tük* or *Tugh*, is the horse-tail or yak-tail standard which among so many Asiatic nations has marked the supreme military command. It occurs as *Taka* in ancient Persian, and Cosmas Indicopleustes speaks of it as *Tupha*. The Nine Orloks or Marshals under Chinghiz were entitled to the *Tuk*, and theirs is probably the class of command here indicated as of 100,000, though the figure must not be strictly taken. Timur ordains that every Amir who should conquer a kingdom or command in a victory should receive a title of honour, the *Tugh* and the *Nakhda* (*infra* Bk. II., ch. iv., note 3). Baber on several occasions speaks of conferring the *Tugh* upon his general for distinguished service. One of the military titles at Bokhara is still *Tukhsabai*, a corruption of *Tugh-Sahibi* (Master of the Tugh). (*Erdman*, 576; *D'Arzac*, 577-8; *Rémusat*, *Langues Tartares*, 303; *Pallas*, *Samml.* I. 283; *Schmidt*, 379, 381; *Baber*, 260, &c.; *Vambery*, 374; *Timour Inst.* p. 283 and 292-3.)

The decimal division of the army was already made by Chinghiz at an early period of his career, and was probably much older than his time. From the Tartars it passed into nearly all the Mussulman States of Asia, and the titles *Min-bashi* or *Bimbashi*, *Yuzbashi*, *Onbashi*, still subsist in Turkestan, and even in Turkey and Persia. The term *Iman* or *Tma* was, according to Herberstein, still used in Russia in his day for 10,000. (*Ramus.* II. 159.)

NOTE 3.—Ramusio's edition says that what with horses and mares there will be an average of 18 beasts (?) to every man.

NOTE 4.—See the Oriental account quoted below in Note 6.

So Dionysius, combining this practice with that next described, relates of the Massagetæ that they have no delicious bread nor native wine:

And white milk

with horse's blood  
meets forth."

—*Orbis Div.* 743-4.

## MARCO POLO.

And Sidonius

"Solitosque cruentum  
Lac potare Getas, et pocula tingere venas."

—*Parag. ad Avitum.*

"When in lack of food they bleed a horse and suck the vein. If they need something more solid, they put a sheep's pudding full of blood under the saddle; this in time gets coagulated and cooked by the heat and then they devour it" (*Georg. Pachymeres*, V. 4). The last is well-known story, but is strenuously denied and ridiculed by Bergmau (*Streifereien*, &c. I. 15). Botero had "heard from a trustworthy source that a Tartar of Perekop, travelling on the steppes, lived for some days on the blood of his horse, and then, not daring to bleed it more, cut off and ate its ears!" (*Relazione Univers.* p. 93).

NOTE 5.—Rubruquis thus describes this preparation, which is called *Kurut*: "The milk that remains after the butter has been made, they allow to get as sour as sour can be, and then boil it. In boiling, curdles, and that curd they dry in the sun; and in this way it becomes as hard as iron-slag. And so it is stored in bags against the winter. In the winter time, when they have no milk, they put that sour curd which they call *Griut*, into a skin, and pour warm water on it, and then shake it violently till the curd dissolves in the water, to which gives an acid flavour; that water they drink in place of milk. But above all things they eschew drinking plain water." From Pallas's account of the modern practice, which is substantially the same, these cakes are also made from the leavings of distillation in making milk-arack. The *Kurut* is frequently made of ewe-milk. Wood speaks of it as an indispensable article in the food of the people of Badakhshan. (*Rub.* 229; *Samml.* I. 136; *Dahl*, u. s.; *Wood*, 311.)

NOTE 6.—Compare with Marco's account the report of the Mongol invasion which was brought by the spies of Mahomed, Sultan of Khwarizm, when invasion was first menaced by Chinghiz: "The army of Chinghiz is countless, as a swarm of ants or locusts. Their warriors are matchless in lion-like valour, in obedience, and endurance. They take no rest and flight or retreat is unknown to them. On their expeditions they are accompanied by oxen, sheep, camels, and horses, and sweet or sour milk suffices them for food. Their horses scratch the earth with their hoofs and feed on the roots and grasses they dig up, so that they need neither straw nor oats. They themselves eat nothing of a clean or the unclean in food, and eat the flesh of all dogs, swine, and bears. They will open a horse's vein, and drink it. In victory they leave neither small nor great women great with child and cleave the fruit they owe to a great river, as they knead mine together, stuff up all their goods

# CHAP. LIV. THE TARTAR CUSTOMS OF WAR.

horses' tails, mount with a hard grip of the mane, and so withal. This passage is an absolute abridgment of many chapters of Carpini. Still more terse was the sketch of Mongol proceedings drawn by a fugitive from Bokhara after Chinghiz's devastations there. It was set forth in one unconscious hexameter:

"*Amidand u khondand u sokhtand u kushland u burdand u raftand!*"

"They came and they sapped, they fired and they ~~trussed~~ trussed up their loot and were gone!"

Juwaini, the historian, after telling the story, adds: "The cream and essence of whatever is written in this volume might be represented in these few words."

A Mussulman author quoted by Hammer, Najmuddin of Rei, gives an awful picture of the Tartar devastations, "Such as had never been heard of, whether in the lands of unbelief or of Islam, and can only be likened to those which the Prophet announced as signs of the Last Day, when he said: 'The Hour of Judgment shall not come until ye shall have fought with the Turks, men small of eye and ruddy of countenance, whose noses are flat, and their faces like hide-covered shields. Those shall be Days of Horror!' 'And what meanest thou by horror?' said the Companions; and he replied, 'SLAUGHTER! SLAUGHTER!' This beheld the Prophet in vision 400 years ago. And could there well be worse slaughter than there was in Rei, where I, wretch that I am, was born and bred, and where the whole population of five hundred thousand souls was either butchered or dragged into slavery?"

Marcq habitually suppresses or ignores the frightful brutalities of the Tartars, but these were somewhat less, no doubt, in Kublai's time.

This is Hayton's account of the Parthian tactics of the Tartars: "They will run away, but always keeping their companies together, and it is very dangerous to give them chase, for as they flee they strike back over their heads, and do great execution among their pursuers. They keep very close rank, so that you would not guess them for their real strength." Carpini speaks to the same effect. Baber, himself of Mongol descent, but heartily hating his kindred, gives this account of their military usage in his day: "Such is the uniform practice of these wretches the Moghuls; if they defeat the enemy they immediately seize the booty; if they are defeated they plunder not only their own allies; and, betide what may, carry off the spoil." (*Periplus*, pp. 383, 620; *Gold Horde*, 11, 80; *Elliot*, II. 368; *Hayton in Rey*, in *Elliot*; *Baber*, 93; *Carpini*, p. 694.)

NOTE 7.—"The Scythians" (i.e. in the above passage, the Tartars). Ptolemy, II. 11, says: "The Scythians, who are the most numerous and powerful of the nomadic tribes, are the most numerous and powerful of the nomadic tribes, and are the most numerous and powerful of the nomadic tribes." (Ptolemy, II. 11, 12; *Elliot*, II. 368; *Hayton in Rey*, in *Elliot*; *Baber*, 93; *Carpini*, p. 694.)

wont to cover the head with nothing better than a loose felt cap, and for other clothing had thought themselves well off with the skins of wild beasts or ill-dressed leather, and had for weapons only clubs and slings, or spears, arrows, and bows extemporised from the oaks and other trees of their mountains and forests, now, forsooth, they will have no meaner clothing than brocades of silk and gold! And their luxury and delicate living came to such a pitch that they stood far as the poles asunder from their original habit" (II. v. 6).

## CHAPTER LV.

\*CONCERNING THE ADMINISTERING OF JUSTICE AMONG THE TARTARS.

THE way they administer justice is this. When any one has committed a petty theft, they give him, under the orders of authority, seven blows of a stick, or seventeen, or twenty-seven, or thirty-seven, or forty-seven, and so forth, always increasing by tens in proportion to the injury done, and running up to one hundred and seven. Of these beatings sometimes they die.<sup>1</sup> But if the offence be horse-stealing, or some other great matter, they cut the thief in two with a sword. Howbeit, if he be able to ransom himself by paying nine times the value of the thing stolen, he is let off. Every Lord or other person who possesses beasts has them marked with his peculiar brand, be they horses, mares, camels, oxen, cows, or other great cattle, and then they are sent abroad to graze over the plains without any keeper. They get all mixt together, but eventually every beast is recovered by means of its owner's brand, which is known. For their sheep and goats they have shepherds. All their cattle are remarkably fine, big, and in good condition.<sup>2</sup>

They have another notable custom, which is this. If any man have a daughter who dies before marriage, and another man have had a son also die before marriage, the parents of the two arrange a grand wedding between the



dead lad and lass. And marry them they do, making a regular contract! And when the contract papers are made out they put them in the fire, in order (as they will have it) that the parties in the other world may know the fact, and so look on each other as man and wife. And the parents thenceforward consider themselves sib to each other just as if their children had lived and married. Whatever may be agreed on between the parties as dowry, those who have to pay it cause to be painted on pieces of paper and then put these in the fire, saying that in that way the dead person will get all the real articles in the other world.'

Now I have told you all about the manners and customs of the Tartars; but you have heard nothing yet of the great state of the Grand Kaan, who is the Lord of all the Tartars and of the Supreme Imperial Court. All that I will tell you in this book in proper time and place, but meanwhile I must return to my story which I left off in that great plain when we began to speak of the Tartars.'

NOTE 1.—The cudgel among the Mongols was not confined to thieves and such like. It was the punishment also of military and state offences, and even princes were liable to it without fatal disgrace. "If they give any offence," says Carpini, "or omit to obey the slightest beek, the Tartars themselves are beaten like donkeys." The number of blows administered was, according to Wassaf, always odd, 3, 5, and so forth, up to 77. (*Carp.* 712; *Iltahan*. I. 37.)

NOTE 2.—"They have no herdsmen or others to watch their cattle because the laws of the Turks (*i.e.* Tartars) against theft are so severe. . . . A man in whose possession a stolen horse is found is obliged to restore it to its owner, and to give nine of the same value; if he cannot, his children are seized in compensation; if he have 10 children, he is slaughtered like a mutton." (*Ibn Batuta*, II. 364.)

NOTE 3.—This is a Chinese custom, though no doubt we may trust Marco for its being a Tartar one also. "In the province of Shensi they have a ridiculous custom, which is to marry dead folks to each other. F. Michael Trigautius, a Jesuit, who lived several years in that province, told it us whilst we were in confinement. It falls out that one man's son and another's daughter die. Whilst the coffins are in the house (and thence) to keep them two or three years, or longer, the

parents agree to marry them; they send the usual presents, as if the pair were alive, with much ceremony and music. After this they put the two coffins together, hold the wedding dinner in their presence and lastly, lay them together in one tomb. The parents, from this forth, are looked on not merely as friends but as relatives—just as they would have been had their children been married when in life." (*Neparette*, quoted by *Marsden*.) Kidd likewise, speaking of the Chinese custom of worshipping at the tombs of progenitors, says: "So strongly does veneration for this tribute after death prevail that parents, in order to secure the memorial of the sepulchre for a daughter who has died during her betrothal, give her in marriage after her decease to her intended husband, who receives with nuptial ceremonies at his own house a paper effigy made by her parents, and after he has burnt it, erects a tablet to her memory—an honour which usage forbids to be rendered to the memory of unmarried persons. The law seeks without effect to abolish this absurd custom." (*China*, &c. p. 179-80.)

The Ingushes of the Caucasus, according to Klaproth, have the same custom: "If a man's son dies, another who has lost his daughter goes to the father and says, 'Thy son will want a wife in the other world; I will give him my daughter; pay me the price of the bride.' Such a demand is never refused, even though the purchase of the bride amount to 30 cows." (*Travels*, *Eng. Trans.* 345.)

NOTE 4.—There is a little doubt about the reading of this last paragraph. The G. T. has—"*Mès desormès volun retourner à nostre conte en la grant plainne ou nos estion quant nos comechames des fais des Tartars*," whilst Pauthier's text has "*Mais desormais vueil retourner à mon conte que je lessai d'or plain quant nous commençames des faiz des Tatars*." The former reading looks very like a misunderstanding of one similar to the latter, where *d'or plain* seems to be an adverbial expression, with some such meaning as "just now," "a while ago." I have not, however, been able to trace the expression elsewhere. Cotgrave has *or primes*, "but even now," &c.; and has also *de plain*, "presently, immediately, out of hand." It seems quite possible that *d'or plain* should have had the meaning suggested.

## CHAPTER LVI.

### SUNDRY PARTICULARS OF THE PLAIN BEYOND CARACORON.

AND when you leave Caracoron and the Altay, in which they bury the bodies of the Tartar Sovereigns, as I told you, you go north for forty days till you reach a country

CHAP. LVI. THE PLAIN BEYOND CARACORON.

called the PLAIN OF BARGU.<sup>1</sup> The people there are called MESCRIP; they are a very wild race, and live by their cattle, the most of which are stags, and these stags, I assure you, they use to ride upon. Their customs are like those of the Tartars, and they are subject to the Great Kaan. They have neither corn nor wine. [They get birds for food, for the country is full of lakes and pools and marshes, which are much frequented by the birds when they are moulting, and when they have quite cast their feathers and can't fly, those people catch them. They also live partly on fish.<sup>2</sup>]

And when you have travelled forty days over this great plain you come to the ocean, at the place where the mountains are in which the Peregrine falcons have their nests. And in those mountains it is so cold that you find neither man nor woman nor beast nor bird, except one kind of bird called *Barguerlac*, on which the falcons feed. They are as big as partridges, and have feet like those of parrots, and a tail like a swallow's, and are very strong in flight. And when the Grand Kaan wants Peregrines from the nest he sends thither to procure them.<sup>3</sup> It is also on islands in that sea that the Gerfalcons are bred. You must know that the place is so far to the north that you leave the North Star somewhat behind you towards the south! The gerfalcons are so abundant there that the Emperor can have as many as he likes to send for. And you must not suppose that those gerfalcons which the Christians carry into the Tartar dominions go to the Great Kaan; they are carried only to the Prince of the Levant.<sup>4</sup>

Now I have told you all about the provinces northward as far as the Ocean Sea, beyond which there is no more land at all; so I shall proceed to tell you of the other provinces on the way to the Great Kaan. Let us, then, return to that province of which I spoke before, called *Cambichu*.

NOTE 1.—The readings differ as to the length of the journey. In Pauthier's text we seem to have first a journey of 40 days from near Karakorum to the Plain of Bargu, and then a journey of 40 days more across the plain to the Northern Ocean. The G. T. seems to present only *one* journey of 40 days (Ramusio, of 60 days), but leaves the interval from Karakorum undefined. I have followed the former, though with some doubt.

NOTE 2.—This paragraph from Ramusio replaces the following in Pauthier's text. "In summer they get abundance of game, both beasts and birds, but in winter there is none to be had because of the great cold."

Marco is here dealing, I apprehend, with hearsay geography, and, as is common in like cases, there is great compression of circumstances and characteristics, analogous to the like compression of little-known regions in medieval maps.

The name *Bargu* appears to be the same with that often mentioned in Mongol history as BARGUCHIN TUGRUM or BARGUTI, and which Rashiduddin calls the northern limit of the inhabited earth. This commenced about Lake Baikal, where the name still survives in that of a river (*Barguzin*) falling into the Lake on the east side, and of a town on its banks (*Barguzinsk*). Indeed, according to Rashid himself, BARGU was the name of one of the tribes occupying the plain; and a quotation from Father Hyacinth would seem to show that the country is still called *Barakhu*.

*Mescript*, or *Mecri*, as in G. T. \* The *Merkit*, a great tribe to the S.E. of the Baikal, were also called *Mekrit*, and sometimes *Megrin*. The *Mekrit* are spoken of also by Carpini and Rubruquis. D'Avezac thinks that the *Kerait*, and not the *Merkit*, are intended by all three travellers. As regards Polo, I see no reason for this view. The name he uses is *Mekrit*, and the position which he assigns to them agrees fairly with that assigned on good authority to the *Merkit* or *Mekrit*. Only, as in other cases, where he is rehearsing hearsay information, it does not follow that the identification of the name involves the correctness of all the circumstances that he connects with that name. We saw in chapter xxx. that under *Pashai* he seemed to lump circumstances belonging to various parts of the region from Badakhshan to the Indus; so here under *Mekrit* he embraces characteristics belonging to tribes extending far beyond the *Mekrit*, and which in fact are appropriate to the Tunguses. Rashiduddin seems to describe the latter under the name of *Uriangkut* of the Woods, a people dwelling beyond the frontier of Barguchin, and in connexion with whom he speaks of their Reindeer obscurely, as well as of their tents of birch bark, and their hunting on snow shoes.

The mention of the Reindeer by Polo in this passage, is one of the interesting points which Pauthier's text omits. Marsden objects to the statement that the stags are ridden upon, and from this motive misrenders "*li qual' anche cavalcano*," as, "which they make use of for the purpose of travelling." Yet he might have found in Witsen that the

## THE PLAIN BEYOND CARACORON.

Reindeer are ridden by various Siberian Tribes, but especially by the Tunguses. Erman is very full on the reindeer-riding of the latter people, having himself travelled far in that way in going to Okhotsk, and gives a very detailed description of the saddle, &c. employed. The reindeer of the Tunguses are stated by the same traveller to be much larger and finer animals than those of Lapland. They are also used for pack-carriage and draught. Old Richard Eden says that the "olde wryters" relate that "certayne Scythians doe ryde on Hartes." I have not traced to what he refers, but if the statement be in any ancient author it is very remarkable. Some old editions of Olaus Magnus have curious cuts of Laplanders and others riding on reindeer, but I find nothing in the text appropriate. (Erdmann, 189, 191; D'Ohsson, I. 103; D'Avezac, 534 seqq.; J. As. ser. 2, tom. xi, ser. 4, tom. xvii. 107; N. et E. XIII. i. 274-6; Witsen, II. 670, 671, 680; Erman, II. 321, 374, 429, 449 seqq., and original German, II. 347 seqq.; Notes on Russia, Hac. Soc. II. 224.)

The numerous lakes and marshes swarming with water-fowl are very characteristic of the country between Yakutsk and the Kolyma. It is evident that Marco had his information from an eye-witness, though the whole picture is compressed. Wrangell, speaking of Nijni Kolyma, says: "It is at the moulting-season that the great bird-hunts take place. The sportsmen surround the nests, and slip their dogs which drive the birds to the water, on which they are easily knocked over with a gun or arrow, or even with a stick. . . . This chase is divided into several periods. They begin with the ducks, which moult first; then come the geese; then the swans. . . . In each case the people take care to choose the time when the birds have lost their feathers." The whole calendar with the Yakuts and Russian settlers on the Kolyma is a succession of fishing and hunting seasons which the same author details (I. 149, 150; 119-121).

NOTE 3.—What little is said of the *Barguerlac* points to some bird of the genus *Pterocles*, or Sand Grouse (to which belong the so-called Rock Pigeons of India), or to the allied *Tetrao Paradoxus* of Pallas, now known as *Syrhaptes Pallasii*. Indeed, we find in Zenker's Dictionary that *Boghurtlák* (or *Baghirtlák*, as it is in Pavet de Courteilles) in Oriental Turkish is the *Kata*, i.e. I presume, the *Pterocles Alchata* of Linnaeus, or Large Pin-tailed Sand Grouse. Mr. Gould, to whom I referred the point, is clear that the *Syrhaptes* is Marco's bird, and I believe there can be no question of it.

The chief difficulty in identification with the *Syrhaptes* or any known bird, would be "the feet like a parrot's." The feet of the *Syrhaptes* are not indeed like a parrot's, though its awkward, slow and tottling gait on the ground, may have suggested the comparison. It has very odd and anomalous feet, a circumstance which may be indicated in another way by calling the bird (according to Hue) *Lung-Kao*, or "Dragon-foot." The hind-toe is absent, the toes are unseparated.

recognisable only by the broad flat tail, and the white rump, whilst the whole foot is covered with short black hair, and is more like a quadruped's paw than a bird's. The home of the Syrrhaptès is in the Altai, the Kailash, and the country round Lake Baikal; though it also visits the north in great flights. "On plains of grass and sandy deserts," says (Birds of Great Britain, Part IV.), "at one season covered with snow and at another sun-burnt and parched by drought, it finds a congenial home; in these inhospitable and little-known regions it breeds, and when necessity compels it to do so, wings its way over immense distances to obtain water or food." Huc says, speaking of the bird at the northern frontier of China: "They generally arrive in great flocks from the north, especially when much snow has fallen, flying with astonishing rapidity, so that the movement of their wings produces a noise like hail." It is said to be very delicate eating. The bird owes its place in Gould's *Birds of Great Britain* to the fact—strongly illustrative



• Syrrhaptès Pallasii.

of its being *moult volant*, as Polo says it is—that it appeared in England in 1859, and since then, at least up to 1863, continued to arrive annually in pairs or companies in nearly all parts of our island, from Penzance to Caithness. And Gould states that it was breeding in the Danish islands. A full account by Mr. A. Newton of this remarkable immigration, is contained in the *Ibis* for April, 1864, and many details in *Stevenson's Birds of Norfolk*, I. 376 *seqq.* There are plates of *Syrrhaptès* in *Raddè's Reisen im Süden von Ost-Sibirien*, Bd. II.; in vol. v. of *Temminck*, Planches Coloriées, Pl. 95; in *Gould*, as above; in *Gray*, *Genera of Birds*, vol. iii. p. 517 (life size); and in the *Ibis* for April, 1860. From the last our cut is taken; but the head and neck are here too dark.

NOTE 4.—Gerfalcons (*Shonkār*) were objects of high estimation in the Middle Ages, and were frequent presents to and from royal personages. Thus among the presents sent with an embassy from King James II. of Aragon to the Sultan of Egypt, in 1314, we find three white gerfalcons. They were sent in homage to Chinghiz and to Kublai, by the Mongols, but I cannot identify the mountains where they or the Peregrines were found. The Peregrine falcon was in Europe sometimes termed *Falcon d'Espagne* (see *Ménage* s. v. *Sahin*). The Peregrine of Northern Asia

## THE KINGDOM OF ERGUIUL.

The Kingdom of Erguiul, that of Siberia, is identical with that of *Erghui*, which is situated in the Sea of Tartary, from which Falconer apparently referring to a Chinese map as his authority; but I know nothing more of it. (*Copmany*, IV. 64-5; *Ibis*, 1862, p. 312; *ibid.*, II. 658.)

## CHAPTER LVII.

### OF THE KINGDOM OF ERGUIUL, AND PROVINCE OF SINJU.

ON leaving Campichu, then, you travel five days across a tract in which many spirits are heard speaking in the night season; and at the end of those five marches, towards the east, you come to a kingdom called ERGUIUL, belonging to the Great Kaan. It is one of the several kingdoms which make up the great Province of Tangut. The people consist of Nestorian Christians, Idolaters, and worshippers of Mahommet.<sup>1</sup>

There are plenty of cities in this kingdom; but the capital is ERGUIUL. You can travel in a south-easterly direction from this place into the province of Cathay. Should you follow that road to the south-east, you come to a city called SINJU, belonging also to Tangut, and subject to the Great Kaan, which has under it many towns and villages.<sup>2</sup> The population is composed of Idolaters, and worshippers of Mahommet, but there are some Christians also. There are wild cattle in that country [almost] as big as elephants, splendid creatures, covered everywhere but on the back with shaggy hair a good four palms long. They are partly black, partly white, and really wonderfully fine creatures [and the hair or wool is extremely fine and white, finer and whiter than silk. Messer Marco brought some to Venice as a great curiosity, and so it was reckoned by those who saw it]. There are also plenty of them tame, which have been caught young. [They also cross them with the common cow, and the cattle from this cross are

VOL. I.

wonderful beasts, and better for work than other animals.] These the people use commonly for burden and general work, and in the plough as well; and at the latter they will do full twice as much work as any other cattle, being such very strong beasts.<sup>3</sup>

In this country too is found the best musk in the world; and I will tell you how 'tis produced. There exists in that region a kind of wild animal like a gazelle. It has feet and tail like the gazelle's, and stag's hair of a very coarse kind, but no horns. It has four tusks, two below, and two above, about three inches long, and slender in form, one pair growing upwards, and the other downwards. It is a very pretty creature. The musk is found in this way. When the creature has been taken, they find at the navel between the flesh and the skin something like an impostume full of blood, which they cut out and remove with all the skin attached to it. And the blood inside this impostume is the musk that produces that powerful perfume. There is an immense number of these beasts in the country we are speaking of. [The flesh is very good to eat. Messer Marco brought the dried head and feet of one of these animals to Venice with him.<sup>4</sup>]

The people are traders and artizans, and also grow abundance of corn. The province has an extent of 26 days' journey. Pheasants are found there twice as big as ours, indeed nearly as big as a peacock, and having tails of 7 to 10 palms in length; and besides them other pheasants in aspect like our own, and birds of many other kinds, and of beautiful variegated plumage.<sup>5</sup> The people, who are Idolaters, are fat folks with little noses and black hair, and no beard, except a few hairs on the upper lip. The women too have very smooth and white skins, and in every respect are pretty creatures. The men are very sensual, and marry many wives, which is not forbidden by their religion. No matter how base a woman's descent may be, if she have beauty she may find a husband among the greatest men in



the land, the man paying the girl's father and mother a great sum of money, according to the bargain that may be made.

NOTE 1.—No approximation to the name of Erguiul in an appropriate position has yet been elicited from Chinese, or other Oriental sources. We cannot go widely astray as to its position, five days east of Kancheu, Klaproth identifies it with Liangcheu-fu; Pauthier with the neighbouring city of Yungchang, on the ground that the latter was in the time of Kublai, the head of one of the *Lüs*, or Circles of Kansuh or Tangut, which he has shown some reason for believing to be the "kingdoms" of Marco.

It is probable, however, that the *town* called by Polo Erguiul lay north of both the cities named, and more in line with the position assigned below to *Egrigaya* (see note 1, ch. lviii.).

I may notice that the structure of the name Ergui-ul or Ergiu-ul, has a look of analogy to that of *Tangku-ul*, named in the next note.

NOTE 2.—No doubt Marsden is right in identifying this with SINING-CHAU, now Sining-fu, the Chinese city nearest to Tibet and the Kokonür frontier. Grueber and Dorville, who passed it on their way to Lhasa, in 1661, call it *urbe ingens*. Sining was visited also by Hue and Gabet, who are unsatisfactory, as usually on geographical matters. They also call it "an immense town," but thinly peopled, its commerce having been in part transferred to Tangku-ul, a small town closer to the frontier.

Sining is called by the Tibetans *Seling* or *Jüing*, by the Mongols *Seling Khoto*. A shawl wool texture apparently made in this quarter, is imported into Kashmir and Ladak, under the name of *S'ling*. (*Kircher*, p. 64, 66; *Della Penna*, 27; *Davis's Report*, App. p. ccxix; *Vigne*, II. 110, 129.)

NOTE 3.—The *Dang*, or Wild Yak, has till late years only been known by vague rumour. It has always been famed in native reports for its great fierceness. The *Haft Iklim* says that "it kills with its horns, by its kicks, by treading under foot, and by tearing with its teeth," whilst the Emperor Humáyün himself told Sidi 'Ali, the Turkish admiral, that when it had knocked a man down it skinned him from head to heels by licking him with its tongue! Dr. Campbell states, in the *Journal of the As. Soc. of Bengal*, that it was said to be four times the size of the domestic Yak. The horns are said sometimes to be three feet long, and of immense girth; they are handed round full of strong drink at the festivals of Tibetan grandees, as the *Murus* horns were in Germany, according to Cæsar. Dr. Jerdan (*Mammals of India*, p. 300) gives the dimensions of a specimen that was shot —

Length of Head and Body .....	9' 6"
"    of Tail .....	3' 4"
"    of Horns .....	2' 6"
Girth of " .....	1' 3"
Height of Animal .....	16½ Hands

and a note, with which I have been favoured by Dr. Campbell (long the respected Superintendent of British Sikkim) says: "Captain Smith, of the Bengal Army, who had travelled in Western Tibet, told me that he had shot many wild Yaks in the neighbourhood of the Mansarawar Lake, and that he measured a bull which was 18 hands high, *i.e.* 6 feet. All that he saw were *black* all over. He also spoke to the fierceness of the animal. He was once charged by a bull that he had wounded, and narrowly escaped being killed. Perhaps my statement (above referred to) in regard to the relative size of the Wild and Tame Yak, may require modification if applied to all the countries in which the Yak is found. At all events the finest specimen of the tame Yak I ever saw, was not in Nepal, Sikkim, Tibet, or Bootan, but in the *Jardin des Plantes*, at *Paris*; and that one, a male, was brought from Shanghai. The best drawing of a Yak I know is that in Turner's 'Tibet.'"

The tame yaks are never, I imagine, "caught young," as Marco says; it is a domesticated *breed*, though possibly, as with buffaloes in Bengal, the breed may occasionally be refreshed by a cross of wild blood. They are employed for riding, as beasts of burden, and in the plough. In the higher parts of our Himalayan provinces, and in Tibet, the Yak itself is most in use; but in the less elevated tracts several breeds crossed with the common Indian cattle are more used. They have a variety of names according to their precise origin. The inferior Yaks used in the plough are ugly enough, and "have more the appearance of large shaggy bears than of oxen," but the Yak used for riding, says Hoffmeister, "is an infinitely handsomer animal. It has a stately hump, a rich silky hanging tail nearly reaching the ground, twisted horns, a noble bearing, and an erect head." Cunningham too, says that the *Dso*, one of the mixed breeds, is "a very handsome animal, with long shaggy hair, generally black and white." Many of the various tame breeds appear to have the tail and back white, and also the fringe under the body, but black and red are the prevailing colours. Some of the crossbred cows are excellent milkers, better than either parent stock.

Notice in this passage the additional and interesting particulars given by Ramusio, *e.g.* the use of the mixed breeds. "Finer than silk," is an exaggeration, or say an *hyperbole*, as is the following expression, "As big as elephants," even with Ramusio's apologetic *quasi*. Caesar says the Hercynian Urus was *magnitudine paullo infra elephantos*.

The Tame Yak is used across the breadth of Mongolia. Rubruquis saw them at Karakorum, and describes them well.

The animal had been noticed by Cosmas in the 6th century, and by *Athen* in the 3rd. The latter speaks of them as black cattle with white

tails, from which fly-flappers were made for Indian kings. And the great Kalidása thus sang of the Yak, according to a learned (if somewhat rugged) version ascribed to Dr. Mill. The poet personifies the Himalaya:—

“For Him the large Yaks in his cold plains that bide  
Whisk here and there, playful, their tails’ bushy pride,  
And evermore flapping those fans of long hair  
Which borrowed moonbeams have made splendid and fair,  
Proclaim at each stroke (what our flapping men sing)  
His title of Honour, ‘The Dread Mountain King.’”

(*N. et E.* XIV. 478; *J. As.* IX. 199; *J. A. S. B.* IX. 566, XXI. 235; *Ladak*, p. 210; *Hoffmeister’s Travels*, p. 441; *Rubr.* 288; *A. De Nat. An.* XV. 14; *J. A. S. B.* I. 342.)

NOTE 4.—Ram. adds that the hunters seek the animal at New Moo at which time the musk is secreted.

The description is good except as to the four tusks, for the musk deer has canine teeth only in the upper jaw, slender and prominent as he describes them. The flesh of the animal is eaten by the Chinese and in Siberia by both Tartars and Russians, but that of the males has a strong musk flavour.

The “immense number” of these animals that existed in the Himalayan countries may be conceived from Tavernier’s statement, that on his visit to Patna, then the great Indian mart for this article, he purchased 7673 pods of musk. These presumably came by way of Nepal; but musk pods of the highest class were also imported from Khotan to Yarkand and Leh, and the lowest price such a pod fetched at Yarkand was 250 tankas, or upwards of 4*l.* This import has long been extinct and indeed the trade in the article, except towards China, has altogether greatly declined, probably (says Mr. Hodgson) because its repute as medicine is becoming fast exploded. In Sicily it is still so used, but apparently only as a sort of decent medical rite, for when it is said “the Doctors have given him musk,” it is as much as to say that they have given up the patient.

Three species of the *Moschus* are found in the Mountains of Tibet and *M. Chrysogaster*, which Mr. Hodgson calls “the loveliest,” and which chiefly supplies the highly-prized pod called *Kághasi*, or “Thin as-paper,” is almost exclusively confined to the Chinese frontier. Like the Yak, the *Moschus* is mentioned by Cosmas, circa A.D. 545, and ~~was~~ appears in a Greek prescription by Aetius of Amida, a physician practising at Constantinople about the same date.

(*Martini*, p. 39; *Tav. Des Indes*, Bk. II. ch. xxiv.; *J. A. S. B.* XI. 285; *Davies’s Rep.* App. p. cccxxvii; *Dr. Flüchiger in Schweiz. Wochensh. für Pharmacie*, 1867.)

NOTE 5.—The China pheasant answering best to the indications in the text, appears to be *Reeves’s Pheasant*. Mr. Gould has identified this bird with Marco’s in his magnificent *Birds of Asia*, and has been

kind enough to show me a specimen which, with the body, measured 6 ft. 8 in. The tail-feathers alone, however, are said to reach to 6 and 7 ft., so that Marco's ten palms was scarcely an exaggeration. These tail-feathers are often seen on the Chinese stage in the cap of the hero of the drama, and decorate the hats of certain functionaries.

*Size* is the point in which the bird fails to meet Marco's description. In that respect the latter would rather apply to the *Crossoptilon Auritum*, which is nearly as big as a turkey (but that pheasant, I believe, has only been procured in Manchuria), or to the glorious *Minal* (*Lophorus Impeyanus*), but then that has no length of tail. The latter seems to be the bird described by Ælian: "Magnificent cocks which have the crest variegated and ornate like a crown of flowers, and the tail feathers not curved like a cock's, but broad and carried in a train like a peacock's; the feathers are partly golden, and partly azure or emerald-coloured." — (*Wood's Birds*, 610, from which I have copied the illustration; *Williams, M. K. I.* 161; *Æl. De Nat. An.* XVI. 2.)



Reeves's Pheasant.

## CHAPTER LVIII.

### OF THE KINGDOM OF EGRIGAIA.

STARTING again from Erguiul you ride eastward for eight days, and then come to a province called EGRIGAIA, containing numerous cities and villages, and belonging to Tangut.<sup>1</sup> The capital city is called CALACHAN.<sup>2</sup> The people are chiefly Idolaters, but there are fine churches belonging to the Nestorian Christians. They are all subjects of the Great Kaan. They make in this city great quantities of camlets of camel's wool, the finest in the world; and some of the camlets that they make are white, for they have white camels, and these are the best of all. Merchants purchase these stuffs here, and carry them over the world for sale.<sup>3</sup>

We shall now proceed eastward from this place and enter the territory that was formerly Prester John's.

NOTE I.—Chinghiz invaded Tangut in three times, viz. in 1205, 1207, 1209 (or according to Erdmann 1208, 1209, and 1226-7, on which last expedition he died).

A. In the third invasion, according to D'O'Hsson's Chinese guide (Father Hyacinth), he took the fortress of Imen, and laid siege to the capital, then at Chung-hing, now Ninghia.

Rashid in a short notice of this campaign, calls the first city *Erica*, *Erlaca*, or as Erdmann has it *Artacki*. In Demaille it is *Ulahai*.

B. On the last invasion (1226), D'O'Hsson's Chinese authority says that Chinghiz took Kancheu and Subcheu, Cholo and Khola in the province of Liangcheu, and then proceeded to the Yellow River and invested Lingcheu, south of Ninghia.

Erdmann, following his reading of Rashiduddin, says Chinghiz took the cities of Tangut, called *Arucki*, *Kachu*, *Sichu*, and *Kamichu*, and besieged Deresgai (D'O'Hsson, *Derssekai*), whilst Shidergu the King of Tangut betook himself to his capital *Artackin*.

D'O'Hsson, also professing to follow Rashid, calls this "his capital *Irgkai*, which the Mongols call *Ircaya*." Klaproth, illustrating Polo, reads "Eyircai, which the Mongols call *Eyircaya*."

Petis de la Croix relating the same campaign and professing to follow Fadlallah, i.e. Rashiduddin, says the king "retired to his fortress of *Artack*."

C. Sanang Setzen several times mentions a city called *Arrenty* in Tangut; but all we can gather as to its position is that to have lain east of Kancheu.

We perceive that the *Arbaca* of P. de la Croix, the *Eyircai* of Klaproth, the *Uiraca* of D'Ohsson, the *Artacki* or *Artuckin* of Erdmann, are all various readings or forms of the same name, and are the same with the Chinese form *Ulahai* of Demailla, and most probably the place is the *Egrigaia* of Polo.

We see also that Erdmann mentions another place *Arucki* (ارقي) in connection with Kancheu and Suhcheu. This is, I suspect, the *Erguiul* of Polo, and perhaps the Irghai of Sanang Setzen.

It would seem that Rashiduddin is wrong in calling Ircayá the capital of the king, a circumstance which leads Klaproth to identify it with Ninghia. Pauthier, identifying Ulahai with Egrigaya, shows that the former was one of the circles of Tangut, but *not* that of Ninghia. Its position, he says, is uncertain. Klaproth, however, inserts it in his map of Asia in the era of Kublai (*Tabl. Hist.*, pl. 22), as *Ulakhai* to the north of Ninghia, near the great bend eastward of the Hoang-Ho. Assuming that he had ground for giving it this position, we may place Egrigaia in that direction. And it is otherwise probable that Polo's route cleared the Hoang-Ho to the north, for he takes no notice of crossing it.

NOTE 2.—As regards *Calachan*, the chief town of Egrigaia, we know nothing except that, according to Klaproth, Rashiduddin mentions CALAJÁN among the cities of Tangut. And it is worthy of note that here is a mountain called by the Mongols *Khalu'an* or *Khaljan*, just in the position we have assigned to Egrigaia (Khaldjan-burgontu of Siepert's *Asia*, Alajan Alin of Gerbillon.)

NOTE 3.—Among the Buraets and Chinese at Kiakhta snow-white camels, without Albino character, are often seen, and probably in other parts of Mongolia (see *Erdmann* II. 261).

*Cammellotti* appear to have been fine woollen textures, by no means what are now called camlets, nor were they necessarily of camel's wool, or those of Angora goat's wool were much valued. M. Douet d'Arcq calls it "a fine stuff of wool approaching to our Cashmere, and sometimes to silk." Indeed, as Mr. Marsh points out, the word is of Arabic origin, and has nothing to do with *Camel*. *Khamlat* is defined in F. Johnson's Dict.: "Camelot, silk and camel's hair; also all silk or velvet, specially pily and plush," and *Khaml* is "pile or plush." *Camelin* was a different and inferior material. There was till recently a considerable import of different kinds of woollen goods from this part of China into Ladakh, Kashmir, and the northern Punjab. Among the names of these were *Sling*, *Shirun*, *Gurun*, and *Khosa*, said to be the names of the towns in China where the goods were made. We have identified *Sling* above (note 2, ch. lvii.), but I can make nothing of the

others. Cunningham also mentions "camlets of camel's hair," under the name of *Suklat*, among imports from the same quarter. The term *Suklat* is, however, applied in the Punjab trade returns to *broadcloth*. Does not this point to the real nature of the *siclatoun* of the Middle Ages? It is, indeed, often spoken of as used for banners, which implies that it was not a heavy woollen :

"There was many gonfanoun  
Of gold, sendel, and siclatoun."

—*King Alisaundre*, in Weber, I. 85.

But it was also a material for ladies' robes, for quilts, leggings, housings, pavilions. Michel does not decide what it was, only that it was generally *red* and wrought with gold. Dozy renders it "silk stuff brocaded with gold," but this seems conjectural. Dr. Rock says it was a thin glossy silken stuff, often with a woof of gold thread, and seems to derive it from the Arabic *ṣakl*, "polishing" (a sword), which is improbable. Perhaps the name is connected with *Šikiliyat*, "Sicily."

(*Marsh on Wedgwood*, and in *Webster in N. Y. Nation*, 1867; *Dout D'Arcq*, p. 355; *Punjab Trade Rep.*, App. ccxix-xx; *Ladak*, 242; *Fr.-Michel, Rich.* I. 221 sqq.; *Dozy, Dict. des Vêtements*, &c.; *Dr. Rock's Kéns. Catal.* xxxix xl)

## CHAPTER LIN

### CONCERNING THE PROVINCE OF TENDUC AND THE DESCENDANTS OF PRESTER JOHN.

TENDUC is a province which lies towards the east, and contains numerous towns and villages; among which is the chief city also called TENDUC. The king of the province is of the lineage of Prester John, George by name, and he holds the land under the Great Kaan; not that he holds anything like the whole of what Prester John possessed, but it is a custom, I may tell you, that these kings of the lineage of Prester John always obtain to wife either daughters of the Great Kaan or other princesses of his family.<sup>1</sup>

In this province is found the stone from which Azure is made. It is obtained from a kind of vein in the earth, and is of very fine quality.<sup>2</sup> There is also a great manu-

facture of fine camlets of different colours from camel's hair. The people get their living by their cattle and tillage, as well as by trade and handicraft.

The rule of the province is in the hands of the Christians as I have told you; but there are also plenty of Idolaters and worshippers of Mahommet. And there is also here a class of people called *Argons*, which is as much as to say in French *Guasmul*, or, in other words, sprung from two different races; to wit, of the race of the Idolaters of Tenduc and of that of the worshippers of Mahommet. They are handsomer men than the other natives of the country, and having more ability they come to have authority; and they are also capital merchants.<sup>4</sup>

You must know that it was in this same capital city of Tenduc that Prester John had the seat of his government when he ruled over the Tartars, and his heirs still abide there; for as I have told you this King George is of his line, in fact, he is the sixth in descent from Prester John.

Here also is what *we* call the country of GOG and MAGOG; *they*, however, call it UNG and MUNGUL, after the names of two races of people that existed in that Province before the migration of the Tartars. *Ung* was the title of the people of the country, and *Mungul* a name sometimes applied to the Tartars.<sup>5</sup>

And when you have ridden seven days eastward through this province you get near the provinces of Cathay. You find throughout those seven days' journey plenty of towns and villages, the inhabitants of which are Mahommetans, but with a mixture also of Idolaters and Nestorian Christians. They get their living by trade and manufactures; weaving those fine cloths of gold which are called *Nasich* and *Naques*, besides silk stuffs of many other kinds. For just as we have cloths of wool in our country, manufactured in a great variety of kinds, so in those regions they have stuffs of silk and gold in like variety.<sup>6</sup>

All this region is subject to the Great Kaan. There is



a city you come to called SINDACHU, where they carry on a great many crafts such as provide for the equipment of the Emperor's troops. In a mountain of the province there is a very good silver mine, from which much silver is got; the place is called YDIFU. The country is well stocked with game, both beast and bird.<sup>7</sup>

Now we will quit that province and go three days' journey forward.

NOTE 1. — Marco's own errors led commentators much astray about Tanduc or Tenduc till Klaproth put the matter in its true light.

Our traveller says that Tenduc had been the seat of Aung Khan's sovereignty; he has already said that it had been the scene of his final defeat, and he tells us that it was still the residence of his descendants in their reduced state. To the last piece of information he can speak as a witness, and he is corroborated by other evidence: but the second statement we have seen to be erroneous, and there can be little doubt that the first is so likewise.

Klaproth pointed out the true position of Tenduc in the vicinity of the great northern bend of the Hoang Ho, quoting Chinese authorities to show that *Thianté* or *Thianté-Kint* was the name of a district or group of towns to the north of that bend, a name which he supposes to be the original of Polo's *Tenduc*. The general position entirely agrees with Marco's indications; it lies on his way eastward from Tangut towards Chagannur and Shangtu (see chapters lx., lxi.), whilst in a later passage (Book II. chap. lxiv.) he speaks of the Caramoran or Hoang-Ho in its lower course, as "coming from the lands of Prester John."

M. Pauthier finds severe fault with Klaproth's identification of the name Tenduc with the Thianté of the Chinese, belonging to a city which had been destroyed 300 years before, whilst he himself will have that name to be a corruption of *Tathung*. The latter is still the name of a city and Fu of northern Shansi, but in Mongol time its circle of administration extended beyond the Chinese wall, and embraced a good deal of the external territory on the left of the Hoang-Ho, being in fact the first *Lu*, or circle, entered on leaving Tangut, and therefore, Pauthier urges, the "Kingdom of Tanduc" of our text. These facts and many more concerning the district are stated by him in great detail. But by referring to Pl. 22 of Klaproth's *Tableaux Historiques*, it will be found Klaproth was perfectly aware of the facts about Tathung; and a further reference to Sprüner's *Historical Atlas* (ed. 1853, No. 80) affords us the indications "*Kerait*, Tathung, (Tenduch)," three words, which in this juxtaposition really convey all the essentials of M. Pauthier's long controversial note.

I find it hard to believe that Marco could get no nearer *TARUNG* than in the form *Tanduc* or *Tenduc*. The original of the last may have been some Mongol name, not recovered. But it is at least conceivable that a name based on the old *Thiante-kiun* might have been retained among the Tartars, from whom, and not from the Chinese, Polo took his nomenclature. Thianté had been, according to Pauthier's own quotations, the *military post of Tathung*; Klaproth cites a Chinese author of the Mongol era, who describes the Hoang-Ho as passing through *the territory of the ancient Chinese city of Thianté*; and M. Pauthier himself (p. 221) quotes from the Modern Imperial Geography a passage which appears to indicate that a chief place in that very territory is *still* known as *Fung-cheu-Thianté-Kiun*.

In the absence of preciser indications, it is reasonable to suppose that the Plain of Tenduc, with its numerous towns and villages, was the extensive and well-cultivated plain which stretches from the Hoang Ho past the city of Kuku-Khotan, or "Blue Town." This tract abounds in the remains of cities attributed to the Mongol era. And it is not improbable that the city of Tenduc was Kuku-Khotan itself, now called by the Chinese Kwei-hwa-ching, but which was known to them in the Middle Ages as *Tsing-cheu*, and to which we find the Kin Emperor of Northern China sending an envoy in 1210 to demand tribute from Chinghiz. The city is still an important mart, and a centre of Lamaistic Buddhism; being the residence of a *Khutukhtu*, or personage combining the characters of cardinal and voluntarily re-incarnate saint, as well as the site of five great convents said to contain nearly 2000 monks each, besides 15 smaller ones. Gerbillon notes that Kuku Khotan had been a place of great trade and population during the Mongol dynasty.

A passage in Rashiduddin does seem, to intimate that the Kerait, the tribe of Aung Khan, alias Prester John, did occupy territory close to the borders of Cathay or Northern China; but neither from Chinese nor from other Oriental sources has any illustration yet been produced of the existence of Aung Khan's descendants as rulers in this territory under the Mongol emperors. There is, however, very positive evidence to that effect supplied by other European travellers, to whom the fables prevalent in the West had made the supposed traces of Prester John a subject of strong interest.

Thus John of Monte Corvino, afterwards Archbishop of Cambaluc or Peking, in his letter from that city of January, 1305, speaks of Polo's King George in these terms: "A certain king of this part of the world, by name George, belonging to the sect of the Nestorian Christians, and of the illustrious lineage of that great king who was called Prester John of India, in the first year of my arrival here [circa 1295-6] attached himself to me, and, after he had been converted by me to the verity of the Catholic faith, took the Lesser Orders, and when I celebrated mass used to attend me wearing his royal robes. Certain others of the Nestorians on this account accused him of apostacy, but he brought over a

great part of his people with him to the true Catholic faith, and build a church of royal magnificence in honour of Our God, of the Holy Trinity, and of Our Lord the Pope, giving it the name of the *Roma Church*. This King George, six years ago, departed to the Lord true Christian, leaving as his heir a son scarcely out of the cradle, and who is now nine years old. And after King George's death his brother perfidious followers of the errors of Nestorius, perverted again all those whom he had brought over to the Church, and carried them back to their original schismatical creed. And being all alone, and not able to leave his Majesty the Cham, I could not go to visit the church above mentioned, which is 20 days' journey distant. . . . I had been in treaty with the late King George, if he had lived, to translate the whole Latin ritual, that it might be sung throughout the extent of his territory; and whilst he was alive I used to celebrate mass in his church according to the Latin rite." The distance mentioned, 20 days' journey from Peking suits quite well with the position assigned to Tenduc, and no doubt the Roman Church was in the city to which Polo gives that name.

Friar Odoric travelling from Peking towards Shensi, about 1326-27 also visits the country of Prester John, and gives to its chief city the name of *Tozan*, in which perhaps we may trace *Tathung*. He speaks as if the family still existed in authority.

King George appears again in Marco's own book (Book IV chap. ii.), as one of Kublai's generals against Kaidu, in a battle fought near Karakorum. (*Journ. As.* IX. 299 seqq.; *D'Ohsson*, I. 123; *Hue's Tartary*, &c. I. 55 seqq.; *Koeppen*, II. 381; *Erdmann's Temudschin Gerbillan* in *Astley*, IV. 670; *Cathay*, p. 146 and 199 seqq.)

NOTE 2.—Such a compact is related to have existed reciprocally between the family of Chinghiz and that of the chief of the Kungurats but I have not found it alleged of the Kerait family except by Friar Odoric. We find, however, many princesses of this family married into that of Chinghiz. Thus three nieces of Aung Khan became wives respectively of Chinghiz himself, and of his sons Juji and Tului; she who was the wife of the latter, Serkukteni Bigi, being the mother of Mangü, Hulaku, and Kublai. Dukuz Khafun, the Christian wife of Hulaku, was a grand-daughter of Aung Khan.

The name *George*, of Prester John's representative, may have been actually Jirjis, Yurji, or some such Oriental form of Georgius. But it is possible that the title was really *Gurgain*, "Son-in-Law," a title of honour conferred on those who married into the imperial blood, and that this title may have led to the statements of Marco and Odoric about the nuptial privileges of the family. *Gurgain* in this sense was one of the titles borne by Timur.\*

\* I should mention that Oppert, in his very interesting monograph, *Der Prester Johannes*, refuses to recognise the Kerait chief at all in that character, and supposes Polo's King George to be the representative of a prince of the *Liao* (*op. cit.* p. 205) who

NOTE 3.—“The *Lapis Armenus*, or Azure, . . . is produced in the district of Tayton-fu (i.e. *Tathung*) belonging to Shansi.” (*Duhalde* in *Astley*, IV. 304; see also *Martini*, p. 36.)

NOTE 4.—This is a highly interesting passage, but difficult, from being corrupt in the G. Text, and over-curt in Pauthier's MSS. In the former it runs as follows: “*Hil hi a une jenerasion de jens que sunt appellés Argon, qe vaut à dire en françois Guasmul, ce est à dire qu'il sunt né del deus generacions de la lengnée des celz Argon Tenduc et des celz reduc et des celz que aorent Maomet. Il sunt biaux homes plus que le autre dou país et plus sa'es et plus mercaant.*” Pauthier's text runs thus: “*Il ont une generation de gens, ces Crestiens qui ont la Seigneurie, qui s'appellent Argon, qui vaut a dire Gasmul; et sont plus beaux homes que les autres mescreans et plus sages. Et pour ce ont il la seigneurie et sont bons marchans.*” And Ramusio: “*Vi e anche una sorte di gente che si chiamano Argon, per che sono nati di due generazioni, cioe da quella di Tenduc che adorano gl' idoli, e da quella che osservano la legge di Macometto. E questi sono i piu belli uomini che si trovino in quel paese e più savi, e più accorti nella mercanzia.*”

In the first quotation the definition of the *Argon* as sprung *de la lengnée*, &c., is not intelligible as it stands, but seems to be a corruption of the same definition that has been rendered by Ramusio, viz., that the *Argon* were half-castes between the race of the *Tenduc* Buddhists and that of the Mahomedan settlers. These two texts do not assert that the *Argon* were Christians. Pauthier's text at first sight seems to assert this, and to identify them with the Christian rulers of the province. But I doubt if it means more than that the Christian rulers have under them a people called *Argon*, &c. The passage has been read with a bias, owing to an erroneous interpretation of the word *Argon* in the teeth of Polo's explanation of it.

Klaproth, I believe, first suggested that *Argon* represents the term *Arkhaiun*, which is found repeatedly applied to Oriental Christians or their clergy, in the histories of the Mongol era.\* No quite satisfactory

as we learn from Demailla's History, after the defeat of the Kin, in which he had assisted Chinghiz, settled in Liaotung, and received from the conqueror the title of King of the Liao. This seems to me geographically and otherwise quite inadmissible.

\* The term *Arkhaiun*, or *Arkaun*, in this sense, occurs in the Armenian History of Stephen Orpelian, quoted by St. Martin. The author of the *Tarikh Jahdu Kushai*, cited by D'Ohsson, says that Christians were called by the Mongols *Arkhain*. When Hulaku invested Baghdad we are told that he sent a letter to the Judges, Shaikhs, Doctors, and *Arkauns*, promising to spare such as should act peaceably. And in the subsequent sack we hear that no houses were spared except those of a few *Arkauns* and foreigners. In Rashiduddin's account of the Council of State at Peking, we are told that the four *Fanchan*, or Ministers of the 2d class, were taken from the four nations of *Tájiks*, *Cathayans*, *Uighurs*, and *Arkaun*. Sabadin *Arkaun* was the name of one of the Envoys sent by Arghun Khan of Persia to the Pope in 1288. Traces of the name appear also in Chinese documents of the Mongol era, as denoting some

explanation has been given of the origin of that term. It is barely possible that it may be connected with that which Polo uses here; but he tells us as plainly as possible that he means by the term, not a Christian, but a *half-breed*.

And in this sense the word is still extant in Tibet, probably also in Eastern Turkestan, precisely in Marco's form, ARGON. It is applied in Ladak, as General Cunningham tells us, specifically to the mixt race produced by the marriages of Kashmirian immigrants with Bôt (Tibetan) women. And it was apparently to an analogous cross between Caucasians and Turanians that the term was applied in Tenduc. Moorcroft also speaks of this class in Ladak, calling them *Argands*. And the author of the *Dabistan*, speaking of the Tibetan Lamas, says: "Their king, if his mother be not of royal blood, is by them called *Arghûn*, and not considered their true king." Cunningham says the word is probably Turki, ارغون, *Arghûn*, 'Fair,' "not *white*," as he writes to me, "but 'ruddy' or 'pink,' and therefore 'fair.' *Arghun* is both Turki and Mogholi, and is applied to all fair children, both male and female, as *Arghun Beg*, *Arghuna Khatun*, &c." Zenker has *Arghurwan*, "the Judas tree, lilac colour, red," &c. We find an *Arghûn* tribe named in Timur's Institutes, which probably derived its descent from such half-breeds. And though the *Arghûn* dynasty of K. Adahar and Sind claimed their descent and name from *Arghûn Khan* of Persia, this may have had no other foundation.

There are some curious analogies between these Argons of whom Marco speaks, and those Mahomedans of Northern China and Chinese Turkestan, lately revolted against Chinese authority, who are called *Tungani*, or as the Russians write in *Dungen*, a word signifying, according to Professor Vámbéry, in Turki, "a convert." These *Tungani* are said by one account to trace their origin to a large body of Uigurs, who were transferred to the vicinity of the Great Wall during the rule of the Thang dynasty (7th to 10th century). Another tradition derives their origin from Samarkand. And it is remarkable that Rashiduddin speaks of a town to the west or north-west of Peking, "most of the inhabitants of which are natives of Samarkand, and have planted a number of gardens in the Samarkand style." The former tradition goes on to say

religious body. Some of these have been quoted by Mr. Wylie; but I have seen no notice taken of a very curious extract given by Visdelou. This states that Kublai in 1289 established a Board of 19 chief officers to have surveillance of the affairs of the Religion of the Cross, of the *Marha*, the *Silistan*, and the *Yelikhaugen*. This Board was raised to a higher rank in 1315; and at that time 72 minor courts presiding over the religion of the *Yelikhaugen* existed under its supervision. Here we evidently have the word *Arkhatum* in a Chinese form; and we may hazard the suggestion that *Marha*, *Silistan*, and *Yelikhaugen* meant respectively the Armenian, Syrian or Jacobite, and Nestorian Churches. (*St. Martin, Mem. II. 133, 143, 379; D'Osson, II. 264; Ilkan, I. 150, 152; Cathay, 264; Acad. VII. 359; Wylie in J. A. S. V. xix. 466; Suppt. to D'Herbelot, 142.*)

that marriages were encouraged between the western settlers and the Chinese women. In after days these people followed the example of their kindred in becoming Mahomedans, but they still retained the practice of marrying Chinese wives, though bringing up their children in Islam. The Tungani are stated to be known in Central Asia for their commercial integrity; and they were generally selected by the Chinese for police functionaries. They are passionate and ready to use the knife; but are distinguished from both Manchus and Chinese by their strength of body and intelligent countenances. Their special feature is their predilection for mercantile speculations.

Looking to the many common features of the two accounts; the origin as a half-breed between Mahomedans of Western extraction and Northern Chinese, the position in the vicinity of the Great Wall, the superior physique, intelligence, and special capacity for trade, it seems highly probable that the Tungani of our day are the descendants of Marco's Argons. Otherwise we may at least point to these analogies as a notable instance of like results produced by like circumstances on the same scene; in fact, of history repeating itself. (See *The Dungens*, by Mr. H. K. Heins, in the Russian Military Journal for August, 1866, and *Western China* in the Ed. Review for April, 1868\*; *Cathay*, p. 261.)

Our author gives the odd word *Guasmul* as the French equivalent of Argon. M. Pauthier has first, of Polo's editors, given the true explanation from Ducange. The word appears to have been in use in the Levant among the Franks as a name for the half-breeds sprung from their own unions with Greek women. It occurs three times in the history of George Pachymeres. Thus he says (*Mich. Pal.* III. 9), that the Emperor Michael "depended upon the *Gasmuls*, or mixt-breeds (*συμμίκτοι*), which is the sense of this word of the Italian tongue, for these were born of Greeks and Italians, and sent them to man his ships; for the race in question inherited at once the military wariness and quick wit of the Greeks, and the dash and pertinacity of the Latins." Again (IV. 26) he speaks of these "*Gasmuls*, whom a Greek would call *δεγενείς*, men sprung from Greek mothers and Italian fathers." Nicephorus Gregoras also relates how Michael Palaeologus, to oppose the projects of Baldwin for the recovery of his fortunes, manned 60 galleys, chiefly with the tribe of *Gasmuls* (*γένος τοῦ Γασμουλικού*), to whom he assigns the same characteristics as Pachymeres (IV. v. 5, also VI. iii. 3, and XIV. x. 11). One MS. of Nicetas Choniates also, in his annals of Manuel Comnenus (see Paris ed. p. 425), speaks of "the light troops whom we call *Basmuls*." Thus it would seem that, as in the analogous case of the *Turcopuli*, sprung from Turk fathers and Greek mothers, their name had come to be applied technically to a class of troops. According to Buchon, the laws of the Venetians in Candia mention as different races in that island the *Vasmulo*, Latino, Blaco, and Griego.

\* A translation of *Heins* was kindly lent me by the author of this article, the lamented Mr. J. W. S. Wyllie.

Ducange, in one of his notes on Joinville, says : " During the time that the French possessed Constantinople, they gave the name of *Gasmoules* to those who were born of French fathers and Greek mothers, or more probably *Gaul-moules*, by way of derision, as if such children by those unequal marriages . . . had in some sort debased the wombs of their mothers ! " I have little doubt (*pax tanti viri*) that the word is in a Gallicised form the same with the surviving Italian *Guazzabuglio*, a galloway, hodge-podge, or mishmash. In one of the examples cited by the *Vocabulario Universale* from Davanzati's Tacitus, the words "*Collupio illarum nationum*" (*Annal.* II. 55) are rendered "*guello guazzabuglio di nazioni*," in which case we come very close to the meaning assigned to *Guasmul*. The Italians are somewhat behind in matters of etymology, and I can get no light from them on the history of this word (see Büchlon, *Chroniques Etrangères*, p. xv; Ducange, *Gloss. Graecitatis*, and his note on Joinville, in Bohn's *Chron. of the Crusades*, 166).

NOTE 5.—It has often been cast in Marco's teeth that he makes no mention of the great wall of China, and that is true ; whilst the apologies made for the omission have always seemed to me unsatisfactory. We shall see presently that the Great Wall is spoken of by his contemporaries Rashiduddin and Abulfeda. Yet I think if we read " between the lines," we shall see reason to believe that the Wall *was* in Polo's mind at this point of the dictation, whatever may have been his motive for withholding distinct notice of it. I cannot conceive why he should say : " Here is what we call the country of Gog and Magog," except as intimating " Here we are *beside* the GREAT WALL known as the Rampart of Gog and Magog," and being there he tries to find a reason why those names should have been applied to it. Why they were really applied to it we have already seen (*supra*, chapter iv., note 3). Abulfeda says : " The Ocean turns northward along the east of China, and then expands in the same direction till it passes China, and comes opposite to the Rampart of Yájúj and Májúj ; " whilst the same geographer's definition of the boundaries of China exhibits that country as bounded on the west by the Indo-Chinese wildernesses ; on the south, by the seas ; on the east, by the Eastern Ocean ; on the north, by the land of Yájúj and Májúj, and other countries unknown. Ibn Batuta, with less accurate geography in his head than Abulfeda, ~~mentions~~ his travels, asks about the Rampart of Gog and Magog ~~about Yájúj and Májúj~~ when he is at Sín Kalán, i.e. Canton, and, as might be expected, gets little satisfaction.

Apart from this interesting point Marsden seems to be right in the general bearing of his explanation of the passage, and I conceive that

\* I owe the suggestion of this to a remark in Oppert's *Presbyter Johannes*, p. 77.



The Kampart of Gog and Magog



the two classes of people whom Marco tries to identify with Gog and Magog do substantially represent the two genera or species, TURKS and MONGOLS, or, according to another nomenclature used by Rashiduddin, the *White* and *Black* Tartars. To the latter class belonged Chinghiz and his MONGOLS proper, with a number of other tribes detailed by Rashiduddin, and these I take to be in a general way the MUNGUL of our text. The *Ung* on the other hand are the UNG-kut, the latter form being presumably only the Mongol plural of UNG. The Ung-kut were a Turk tribe who were vassals of the Kin Emperors of Cathay, and were intrusted with the defence of the Wall of China, or an important portion of it, which was called by the Monguls *Ungu*, a name which some connect with that of the tribe. Erdmann indeed asserts that the wall by which the Ung-kut dwelt was not the Great Wall, but some other. There are traces of other great ramparts in the steppes north of the present wall. But Erdmann's arguments seem to me weak in the extreme.

Vincent of Beauvais has got from some of his authorities a conception of the distinction of the Tartars into two races, to which however he assigns no names: "*Sunt autem duo genera Tartarorum, diversa quidem habentia idiomata, sed unam legem ac ritum, sicut Franci et Theutonici.*" But the result of his effort to find a realization of Gog and Magog is that he makes *Guyuk Kaan* into Gog, and *Mangu Kaan* into Magog. Even the intelligent Friar Ricold says of the Tartars: "They say themselves that they are descended from Gog and Magog: and on this account they are called *Megoli*, as if from a corruption of *Magogoli*." (*Abulfeda in Buscaino*, IV. 110, 274 5; *J. B.* IV. 274; *Golden Horde*, 34, 68; *Erdmann*, 241 2, 257 8; *Link* I. 250, 263, 268; *Vinc. Beller.* *Spec. Hist.* XXIX. 73, XXXI. 32 34; *Proc. Quat.* 118.)

NOTE 9. The towns and villages were probably those immediately north of the Great Wall between 112° and 115° E. long., of which many remains exist, ascribed to the time of the Yuan or Mongol dynasty.

Of the cloths called *tabaks* and *caus* we have spoken before (*suprà*, chap. vi. note 4). These stuffs or some such as these were, I believe, what the medieval writers called *Tartary cloths*, not because they were made in Tartary, but because they were brought from China and its borders through the Tartar dominions, as we find that for like reason they were sometimes called stuffs of *Russia*. Dante alludes to the supposed skill of Turks and Tartars in weaving gorgeous stuffs, and Boccaccio, commenting thereon, says that Tartarian cloths are so skillfully woven that no painter with his brush could equal them. Maundevile often speaks of cloths of Tartary (*l. c.* p. 175, 247). So also Chaucer:

"On every trunpe hanging a broad banere  
Of fine Tartarian."

Again, in the French Inventory of the *Garde Meuble* of 1353 we find

two pieces of *Tartary*, one green and the other red, priced at 15 crowns each. (*Flower and Leaf*, 211; *Dante*, *Inf.* XVII. 17, and *Longfellow*, p. 159; *Douet d'Arcq*, p. 328; *Fr.-Michel*, *Rech.* I. 315, II. 166 *seqq.*)

NOTE 7.—SINDACHU (Sindacui, Suidatui, &c. of the MSS.), there can be little doubt, is SIWANHOA-FU, called under the Kin dynasty *Siwanto-chau*, more than once besieged and taken by Chinghiz. It is said to have been a summer residence of the later Mongol Emperors, and fine parks full of grand trees remain on the western side. It is still a large town and the capital of a department or *Fu*, about 25 m. south of the Gate station on the Great Wall at Chang Kia Kau which the Mongols and Russians call Kalgan. There is still a considerable manufacture of felt and other woollen articles here.

*Ydifu* has not been identified. Mr. Grant, however, mentions extensive mines of silver and copper as formerly worked near Kalgan, and Hedde and Rondot speak of the chief production of silver in China as being in the north of Shansi near the Wall. (*Biot*, p. 183; *J. R. G. S.* XXXIII. 171; *Étude Pratique*, &c. p. 13.)

## CHAPTER LX.

### CONCERNING THE KAAN'S PALACE OF CHAGANNOR.

AT the end of those three days you find a city called CHAGAN NOR [which is as much as to say White Pool], at which there is a great Palace of the Grand Kaan's; and he likes much to reside there on account of the Lakes and Rivers in the neighbourhood, which are the haunt of swans<sup>1</sup> and of a great variety of other birds. The adjoining plains too abound with cranes, partridges, pheasants, and other game birds, so that the Emperor takes all the more delight in staying there, in order to go a-hawking with his gerfalcons and other falcons, a sport of which he is very fond.<sup>2</sup>

There are five different kinds of cranes found in those tracts, as I shall tell you. First, there is one which is very big, and all over as black as a crow; the second kind again is all white, and is the biggest of all; its wings are really

beautiful, for they are adorned with round eyes like those of a peacock, but of a resplendent golden colour, whilst the head is red and black on a white ground. The third kind is the same as ours. The fourth is a small kind, having at the ears beautiful long pendent feathers of red and black. The fifth kind is grey all over and of great size, with a handsome head, red and black.<sup>3</sup>

Near this city there is a valley in which the Emperor has had several little houses erected in which he keeps in mew a huge number of *cators*, which are what we call the Great Partridge. You would be astonished to see what a quantity there are, with men to take charge of them. So whenever the Kaan visits the place he is furnished with as many as he wants.<sup>4</sup>

NOTE 1.---“*Ou demeurent sesnes.*” *Sesnes, Cesnes, Cecini, Cesanae*, is a medieval form of *cygnes, cigni*, which seems to have escaped the dictionary-makers. It occurs in the old Italian version of Brunetto Latini's *Tresor*. Bk. V. ch. xxv., as *cecino*; and for other examples see *Cathay*, p. 125.

NOTE 2.---The city called by Polo CHAGAN-NOR (meaning in Mongol, as he says, “White Lake”) is probably the same as *Chaghan Balghassun*, mentioned by Timkowski as an old city of the Mongol era, the ruined rampart of which he passed about 30 m. north of the Great Wall at Kalgan, and some 55 m. from Siwanhoa, adjoining the Imperial pastures. “A short distance to the north of Tsagan Balghassun the Narin-gol falls into a lake which is connected with the Angouli-Nor, a great lake to the north-west of a vast plain. *Game is very plentiful in these parts, especially swans*, which are much esteemed by the Mongols.”

A Russian map of the route between Kiakhta and Peking, of which I have seen a translation printed from wooden blocks by the missionaries at Peking, shows close to the west of Chagan Balghassun (“White-Town”) a lake called *Chagil Chaghan Nor*.

The town appears as *Tekahan Toloho* in D'Anville. It is also, I imagine, the *Arulun Tsaghan Balghassun* which S. Setzen says Kublai built about the same time with Shangts and another city “on the side of the Altai,” by which here he seems to mean the Khingan range adjoining the Great Wall. (*Time* II. 374, 378-9; *S. Sets*. 115.)

I see Ritter has made the same identification of (II. 141).

NOTE 3.—The following are the best results I can arrive at in the identification of these five cranes.

1. Radde mentions as a rare crane in South Siberia *Grus Monachus*, called by the Buráits *Kard Togorü*, or "Black Crane." Atkinson also speaks of "a beautiful black variety of crane," probably the same. The *Grus Monachus* is not, however, jet black, but brownish rather. (*Radde, Reisen*, Bd. II. p. 318; *Atkinson, Or. and W. Sib.* 548.)

2. *Grūs Leucogeranus* (?) whose chief habitat is Siberia, but which sometimes comes as far south as the Punjab. It is the largest of the genus, snowy white, with red face and beak; the ten largest quills are black, but this barely shows as a narrow black line when the wings are closed. The resplendent golden eyes on the wings remain unaccounted for; no naturalist whom I have consulted has any knowledge of a crane or crane-like bird with such decorations. When 'tis discovered, let it be the *Grus Poli*!

3. *Grus cinerea*.

4. The colour of the pendants varies in the texts. Pauthier's and the G. Text have *red and black*; the Lat. S. G. *black* only, the Crusca *black and white*, Ramusio *feathers red and blue* (not pendants). The *red and black* may have slipped in from the preceding description. I incline to believe it to be the Demoiselle, *Anthropoides Virgo*, which is frequently seen as far north as Lake Baikal. It has a tuft of pure *white* from the eye, and a beautiful black pendant ruff or collar; the general plumage purplish-grey.

5. Certainly the Indian *Sáras* (vulgo Cyrus), or *Grus Antigone*, which answers in colours and grows to 52 inches high.

NOTE 4.—*Cator* occurs only in the G. Text and the Crusca, in the latter with the interpolated explanation "*ciòè coturnici*" (*i. e.* quails), whilst the S. G. Latin has *coturnices* only. I suspect this impression has assisted to corrupt the text, and that it was originally written or dictated *ciacor* or *çacor*, viz. *chakór*, a term applied in the East to more than one kind of "Great Partridge." Its most common application in India is to the Himalayan red-legged partridge, much resembling on a somewhat larger scale the bird so called in Europe. It is the "Francolin" of Moorcroft's Travels, and the *Caccabis Chukor* of Gray. According to Cunningham the name is applied in Ladak to the bird sometimes called the Snow-pheasant, Jerdan's Snow-cock, *Tetraogallus Himalayensis* of Gray. And it must be the latter which Moorcroft speaks of as "the gigantic Chukor, much larger than the common partridge, found in large coveys on the edge of the snow . . . one plucked and drawn weighed 5 lbs." From the extensive diffusion of the term, which seems to be common to India, Tibet, and Persia (for the latter, see Abbott in *J. R. G. S.* XXV. 41), it is likely enough to be of Mongol origin, not improbably "*Tsokhor*, dappled or pied." (*Kovalevsky*, No. 2196, and *Strahlenberg's*

**Vocabulary**; see also *Ladak*, 205; *Monier*, I. 313, 432; *Jerdon's Birds of India*, III. 549, 572; *Dunlop, Hunting in Himalaya*, 178.)

The keeping of partridges for the table is alluded to by Chaucer in his portrait of the Franklin :

" It snewed in his hous-of mete and drinke,  
Of alle deyntees that men could of thinke;  
After the sondry sesons of the yere  
So changed he his mete and his soupere.  
*Full many a fat partrich hadde he in mew,*  
And many a breme and many a lace in stewe."

## CHAPTER LXI.

OF THE CITY OF CHANDI AND THE KAAN'S PALACE AND GARDENS.

AND when you have ridden three days from the city last mentioned, between north-east and north, you come to a city called CHANDI, which was built by the Kaan now reigning. There is at this place a very fine marble Palace, the rooms of which are all gilt and painted with figures of men and beasts and birds, and with a variety of trees and flowers, all executed with such exquisite art that you regard them with delight and astonishment.

Round this Palace a wall is built, inclosing a compass of 16 miles, and inside the Park there are fountains and rivers and brooks, and a great number of alows, with all kinds of wild animals (some tame and some are of ferocious nature), which the Emperor has procured and placed there to supply food for his falcons and hawks which he keeps there in mew. Of these there are more than 200 gerfalcons alone, without reckoning the other hawks. The Kaan himself goes every week to see his birds siting in mew, and sometimes he rides through the park with a leopard behind him on his horse's croup; and then if he sees any animal that takes his fancy, he slips his leopard at it, and

the game when taken is made over to feed the hawks in mew. This he does for diversion.

Moreover [at a spot in the Park where there is a charming wood] he has another Palace built of cane, of which I must give you a description. It is gilt all over, and most elaborately finished inside. [It is stayed on gilt and lackered columns, on each of which is a dragon all gilt, the tail of which is attached to the column whilst the head supports the architrave, and the claws likewise are stretched out right and left to support the architrave.] The roof, like the rest, is formed of canes, covered with a varnish so strong and excellent that no amount of rain will rot them. These canes are a good 3 palms in girth, and from 10 to 15 paces in length. [They are cut across at each knot, and then the pieces are split so as to form from each two hollow tiles, and with these the house is roofed; only every such tile of cane has to be nailed down to prevent the wind from lifting it.] In short, the whole Palace is built of these canes, which (I may mention) serve also for a great variety of other useful purposes. The construction of the Palace is so devised that it can be taken down and put up again with great celerity; and it can all be taken to pieces and removed whithersoever the Emperor may command. When erected, it is stayed [against mishaps from the wind] by more than 200 cords of silk.<sup>2</sup>

The Lord abides at this Park of his, dwelling sometimes in the Marble Palace and sometimes in the Cane Palace for three months of the year, to wit June, July, and August; preferring this residence because it is by no means hot; in fact it is a very cool place. When the 28th day of [the Moon of] August arrives he takes his departure, and the Cane Palace is taken to pieces.<sup>3</sup> But I must tell you what happens when he goes away from this Palace every year on the 28th of the August [Moon].

You must know that the Kaan keeps an immense stud

of white horses and mares, in fact more than 10,000 of them, and all pure white without a speck. The milk of these mares is drunk by himself and his family, and by none else, except by those of one great tribe that have also the privilege of drinking it. This privilege was granted them by Chinghis Kaan, on account of a certain victory that they helped him to win long ago. The name of the tribe is HORIAD.

Now when these mares are passing across the country, and any one falls in with them, be he the greatest lord in the land, he must not presume to pass until the mares have gone by; he must either tarry where he is, or go a half-day's journey round if need so be, so as not to come nigh them; for they are to be treated with the greatest respect. Well, when the Lord sets out from the Park on the 28th of August, as I told you, the milk of all those mares is taken and sprinkled on the ground. And this is done on the injunction of the Idolaters and Idol-priests, who say that it is an excellent thing to sprinkle that milk on the ground every 28th of August, so that the Earth and the Air and the False Gods shall have their share of it, and the Spirits likewise that inhabit the Air and the Earth. And thus those beings will protect and bless the Kaan and his children and his wives and his folk and his gear, and his cattle and his horses, his corn and all that is his. After this is done, the Emperor is off and away.

But I must now tell you a strange thing that hitherto I have forgotten to mention. During the three months of every year that the Lord resides at that place, if it should happen to be bad weather, there are certain crafty enchanters and astrologers in his train, who are such adepts in necromancy and the diabolic arts, that they are able to prevent any cloud or storm from passing over the spot on which the Emperor's Palace stands. The sorcerers who do this are called TERT and KATMUR, which are the

men of two nations of Idolaters. Whatever they do in this way is by the help of the Devil, but — make those people believe that it is compassed by dint of their own sanctity and the help of God.<sup>6</sup> [They always go in a state of dirt and uncleanness, devoid of respect for themselves, or for those who see them, unwashed, unkempt, and sordidly attired.]

These people also have a custom which I must tell you. If a man is condemned to death and executed by the lawful authority, they take his body and cook and eat it. But if any one die a natural death then they will not eat the body.<sup>7</sup>

There is another marvel performed by those *Bacsi*, of whom I have been speaking as knowing so many enchantments.<sup>8</sup> For when the Great Kaan is at his capital and in his great Palace, seated at his table, which stands on a platform some eight cubits above the ground, his cups are set before him [on a great buffet] in the middle of the hall pavement, at a distance of some ten paces from his table, and filled with wine, or other good spiced liquor such as they use. Now when the Lord desires to drink, these enchanter by the power of their enchantments cause the cups to move from their place without being touched by anybody, and to present themselves to the Emperor! This every one present may witness, and there are oft-times more than 10,000 persons thus present. 'Tis a truth and no lie! and so will tell you the sages of our own country who understand necromancy, for they also can perform it.<sup>9</sup>

And when the Idol Festivals come round, these *Bacsi* go to the Prince and say: "Sire, the Feast of such a god is come" (naming him). "My Lord, you know," the enchanter will say, "that this god, when he gets no offerings, always sends bad weather and spoils our seasons. So ye pray you to give us such and such a number of



black-faced sheep," naming whatever number they please. "And we beg also, ~~and say~~ that we may have such a quantity of incense, and such a quantity of lign-aloes, and —so much of this, so much of that, and so much of t'other, according to their fancy—" that we may perform a solemn service and a great sacrifice to our Idols, and that so they may be induced to protect us and all that is ours."

The *Bacsi* say these things to the Barons entrusted with the Stewardship, who stand round the Great Kaan, and these repeat them to the Kaan, and he then orders the Barons to give everything that the Bacsi have asked for. And when they have got the articles they go and make a great feast in honour of their god, and hold great ceremonies of worship with grand illuminations and quantities of incense of a variety of odours, which they make up from different aromatic spices.\* And then they cook the meat, and set it before the idols, and sprinkle the broth hither and thither, saying that in this way the idols get their bellyful. —but it is that they keep their festivals. You must know that each of the idols has a name of his own, and a fest-day, just as our Saints have their anniversaries.

They have also ~~some~~ Minsters and Abbeys, some of them as big as a small town, with more than two thousand monks ~~live~~ after the fashion in a single abbey." These monks dress more decently than the rest of the people, and have the head and beard shaven. There are some among these *Bacsi* who are allowed by their rule to take wives, and who have plenty of children."

Then there is another kind of devotees called *Sensin*, who are men of extraordinary abstinence after their fashion, and lead a life of such hardship as I will describe. All their life long they eat nothing but bran, which they take mixt with hot water. That is their food, bran and nothing but

bran, and water for their drink. 'Tis a lifelong fast! so that I may well say their life is one of extraordinary asceticism. They have great idols, and plenty of them; but they sometimes also worship fire. The other idolaters who are not of this sect call these people heretics—*Palmaras* as we should say"—because they do not worship their idols in their own fashion. Those of whom I am speaking would not take a wife on any consideration." They wear dresses of hempen stuff, black and blue,<sup>4</sup> and sleep upon mats; in fact their asceticism is something astonishing. Their idols are all feminine, that is to say, they have women's names.

Now let us have done with this subject, and let me tell you of the great state and wonderful magnificence of the Great Lord of Lords; I mean that great Prince who is the Sovereign of the Tartars, CUBLAY by name, that most noble and puissant Lord.

NOTE 1.—*Chandu*, called more correctly in Ramusio *Xandu*, i.e. SHANDU, and by Fr. Odorico *Sandu*, viz. SHANGTU or "Upper Court," the Chinese title of Kublai's summer residence at Kaipingfu (see chap. xiii. of Prologue). The ruins of the palace and city existed at the end of the 17th century, when they were seen by Gerbillon; and the Imperial Geography of the existing dynasty mentions that these ruins contained an inscription of the reign of Kublai.

In the wail which Sanang Setzen, the poetical historian of the Mongols, puts, perhaps with some traditional basis, into the mouth of Toghon Temur, the last of the Chinghizide dynasty in China, when driven from his throne, the changes are rung on the lost glories of his capital *Daitu* (see *infra*, Book II. chap. xi.) and his summer palace *Shangtu*; thus (I translate from Schott's amended German rendering of the Mongol):

"My vast and noble Capital, My Daitu, My splendidly adorned!  
And Thou my cool and delicious Summer-seat, my Shangtu-Keibung!  
Ye also, yellow plains of Shangtu, Delight of my godlike Sires!  
I suffered myself to drop into dreams,—and lo! my Empire was gone!  
Ah Thou my Daitu, built of the nine precious substances!  
Ah my Shangtu-Keibung, Union of all perfections!  
Ah my Fame! Ah my Glory, as Khagan and Lord of the Earth!

When I used to awake betimes and look forth, how the breezes blew loaded  
with fragrance ! \*

And turn which way I would all was glorious perfection of beauty !

\* \* \* \* \*

Alas for my illustrious name as the Sovereign of the World !

Alas for my Daire, seat of Beauty, Glorious work of the Immortal KUBLAI !

ALL THIS WAS LOST ! \*

The site of Shangtu Keifong, the latter word being the Mongol form of the Chinese *Kaiping-fu*, the *Kaiping-fu* of Polo) is marked on the Jesuit maps *Djas Naiman Suai* ("The 108 Temples"), but it is now represented by Tolon-Nur, which M. Huc describes as a large, busy, bustling, dirty town, with a great manufactory of images of Buddha. It stands about 100 m. on a N.E. bearing from the site we have assigned to Chaghan-Nur. The river that runs by the place retains, or did retain in Gerbillon's time, the name of Shangtu.

It was whilst reading this passage of Marco's narrative in old Purchas that Coleridge fell asleep, and dreamt the dream of Kublai's Paradise, beginning :

" In Xanadu did Kubla Khan

A stately pleasure dome decree :

Where Alph, the sacred River, ran,

By caverns measureless to man,

Down to a sunless sea.

So twice five miles of fertile ground

With walls and towers were girdled round :

And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills, \*

Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree ;

And here were forests, ancient as the hills,

Em'olding sunny spots of greenery."

It would be a singular coincidence in relation to this poem were Klapproth's reading correct of a passage in Rashiduddin which he renders as saying that the palace at Kaiminfu was "called Langtin, and was built after a plan that Kublai had seen in a dream, and had retained in his memory." But I suspect D'Ohsson's reading is more accurate, which runs : "Kublai caused a Palace to be built for him east of Kaipingfu, called Lengten ; but he abandoned it in consequence of a dream." For we see from Sanang Seton that the palaces of Lengten and Kaiming or Shangtu were distinct. "Between the year of the Rat (1264), when Kublai was fifty years old, and the year of the Sheep (1271), in the space of eight years he built four great cities, viz. for Summer Residence SHANGTU KEIFONG, KÜRDÜ BALGHASSUN, for Winter Residence YEKE DAITU KHOTAN, and on the shady side of the Altai (see ch. li. note 3, *supra*) ARULUN TSAGHAN BALGHASSUN, and ERCHÜGIN LANGTING BALGHASSUN." (Gerbillon in *Asiatick*, IV. 701-716 ; *J. As.* ser. 2, tom. xi. 345-50 ; Schott, *Die letzten Jahre der Mongolenherrschaft in China* (Berl. Acad. d. Wissensch. 1850, p. 302-3) ; *Huc's Tartary*, &c., p. 14 *seqq.* ; *Cathay*, 134, 261 ; *S. Seton*, p. 115.)

One of the pavilions of the celebrated Yuen-min-Yuen may give

some idea of the probable style, though not of the scale, of Kublai's Summer Palace.



Pavilion at Yuen-nin-Yuen.

NOTE 2.—Ramusio is here so much more lucid than the other texts, that I have adhered mainly to his account of the building. The roof described is of a kind in use in the Indian Archipelago, and in some other parts of Transgangetic India, in which the semi-cylinders of bamboo are laid just like Roman tiles.

Rashiduddin gives a curious account of the way in which the foundations of the terrace on which this palace stood were erected in a lake. He says, too, in accord with Polo: "Inside the city itself a second palace was built, about a bowshot from the first; but the Kaan

generally takes up his residence in the palace outside the town," i.e., as I imagine, in Marco's Camp Palace. (*Cathay*, p. 261-2.)

Marco might well say of the bamboo that "it serves also a great variety of other purposes." An intelligent native of Arakan who accompanied me in wanderings on duty in the forests of the Burmese frontier the beginning of 1853, and who used to ask many questions about Europe, seemed able to apprehend almost everything except the possibility of existence in a country without bamboos! "When I speak of bamboo huts, I mean to say that posts and walls, wall-plates and rafters, floor and thatch, and the withes that bind them, are all of bamboo. In fact, it might almost be said that among the Indo-Chinese nations the staff of life is a bamboo! Scaffolding and ladders, landing-jetties, fishing apparatus, irrigation wheels and scoops, oars, masts, and yards [add in China, sails, cables, and caulking, asparagus, medicine, and works of fantastic art], spears and arrows, hats and helmets, bow, bowstring and quiver, oil-cans, water-stoups and cooking-pots, pipe-sticks [tinder and means of producing fire], conduits, clothes boxes, pawn-boxes, dinner-trays, pickles, preserves, and melodious musical instruments, torches, footballs, cordage, bellows, mats, paper: these are but a few of the articles that are made from the bamboo;" and in China, to sum up the whole, as Barrow observes, it maintains order throughout the Empire! (*Asia Minor*, p. 153; and see also *Wallace Ind. Arch.* I. 120 seqq.)

NOTE 3. The Emperor . . . began this year (1264) to depart from Yenking (Peking) in the 2nd or 3rd month for Shangtu, not returning until the 8th month. Every year he made this passage, and all the Mongol emperors who succeeded him followed his example." (*Gaubil*, p. 144.) Thus Oghuz, speaking of Kublai's great-grandson Yesun Temur, says: "Now this Emperor passeth the summer at a certain place, which is called Saxun, amongst towns is the North, and the coolest habitation in the world. But in the winter season he abideth at CAM PAI." (*ibid.* 144.)

NOTE 4. White horses were presented in homage to the Kaan on New years Day (*the White Horse*, as we shall see below (Bk. II. ch. vi.). Oghuz also mentions this practice; and, according to Huc, the Mongols observed it at least to the time of the Emperor Kanghi. Ulugh Bek also speaks of annual tributes of white camels and white horses from the Khans of the Kalkas and other Mongol dignitaries, in the present century. (*Huc's Tartary, &c.*; *Tim.* II. 33.)

By the *Uirad* are no doubt intended the *Uirad* or *Oirad*, a name signifying the "Closely Allied," or Confederates. They were not of the tribes properly called Mongol, but after their submission to Chinghiz they remained closely attached to him. In Chinghiz's victory over Aung-Khan, as related by S. Setzen, we find Turulji Taishi, the son of the chief of the *Oirad*, one of Chinghiz's three chief captains; perhaps that is the victory alluded to. The seats of the *Oirad* appear to have been about the head waters of the Yen, or Upper Yenisei.

In A.D. 1295 there took place a curious desertion from the service of Ghazan Khan of Persia of a vast corps of the Oirad, said to amount to 18,000 *tents*. They made their way to Damascus, where they were well received by the Mameluke Sultan. But their heathenish practices gave dire offence to the Faithful. They were settled in the *Sakht*, or coast districts of Palestine. Many died speedily; the rest embraced Islam, spread over the country, and gradually became absorbed in the general population. Their sons and daughters were greatly admired for their beauty. (*S. Setz*, p. 87; *Erdmann*, 187; *Pallas*, *Samml.* I. 5 *seqq.*; *Makrizi*, III. 29.)

NOTE 5.—Rubruquis assigns such a festival to the month of May. "On the 9th day of the May Moon they collect all the white mares of their herds and consecrate them. The Christian priests also must then assemble with their thuribles. They then sprinkle new cosmos (*Kumiz*) on the ground, and make a great feast that day, for according to their calendar, it is their time of first drinking new cosmos, just as we reckon of our new wine at the feast of St. Bartholomew (Aug. 25), or that of St. Sixtus (Aug. 6), or of our fruit on the feast of St. James and St. Christopher" (July 25). The Yakuts also hold such a festival in June or July, when the mares foal, and immense wooden goblets of *Kumiz* are emptied on that occasion. They also pour out *Kumiz* for the Spirits to the four quarters of heaven.

Baber tells that among the ceremonies of a Mongol Review the Khan and his staff took *Kumiz* and sprinkled it towards the standards. An Armenian author of the Mongol era says that it was the custom of the Tartars, before drinking, to sprinkle drink towards heaven, and towards the four quarters. Mr. Atkinson notices the same practice among the Kirghiz: and I found the like in old days among the Kasias of the eastern frontier of Bengal.

The time of year assigned by Polo for the ceremony implies some change. Perhaps it had been made to coincide with the Festival of Water Consecration of the Lamas, with which the time named in the text seems to correspond. On that occasion the Lamas go in procession to the rivers and lakes and consecrate them by benediction and by casting in offerings, attended by much popular festivity.

Rubruquis seems to intimate that the Nestorian priests were employed to consecrate the white mares by incensing them. In the rear of Lord Canning's camp in India I once came upon the party of his *Skutr Suwars*, or dromedary express riders, busily engaged in incensing with frankincense the whole of the dromedaries, which were kneeling in a circle. I could get no light on the practice, but it was very probably a relic of the old Mongol custom. (*Rubr.* 363; *Erman*, II. 397; *Billings' Journey*, Fr. Tr. I. 217; *Baber*, 103; *J. As.* ser. 5, tom. xi. p. 249; *Atk. Amoor*, p. 47; *J. A. S. B.* XIII. 628; *Koeppen*, II. 313.)

NOTE 6.—The practice of weather-conjuring was in great vogue among the Mongols, and is often alluded to in their history.

The operation was performed by means of a stone of magical virtues, called *Yadah* or *Jadah-Tash*, which was placed in or hung over a basin of water with sundry ceremonies. The possession of such a stone is ascribed by the early Arab traveller Ibn Mohalhal to the *Kimdk*, a great tribe of the Turks. In the war raised against Chinghiz and Aung Khan, when still allies, by a great confederation of the Naiman and other tribes in 1202, we are told that Sengun, the son of Aung-Khan, when sent to meet the enemy, caused them to be enchanted, so that all their attempted movements against him were defeated by snow and mist. The fog and darkness were indeed so dense that many men and horses fell over precipices, and many also perished with cold. In another account of (apparently) the same matter, given by Mir-Khond, the conjuring is set on foot by the *Yadachi* of Buyruk Khan, Prince of the Naiman, but the mischief all rebounds on the conjuror's own side.

In Tului's invasion of Honan in 1231-2, Rashiduddin describes him, when in difficulty, as using the *Jadah* stone with success.

Timur, in his Memoirs, speaks of the Jets using incantations to produce heavy rains which hindered his cavalry from acting against them. A *Yadachi* was captured, and when his head had been taken off the storm ceased.

Baber speaks of one of his early friends, Khwaja Ka Mulai, as excelling in fulcunry and acquainted with *Yadagiri* or the art of bringing on rain and snow by means of enchantment. When the Russians besieged Kuan in 1552 they suffered much from the constant heavy rains, and this annoyance was universally ascribed to the arts of the Tartar Queen, who was celebrated as an enchantress. Shah Abbas believed he had learned the Tartar secret, and put much confidence in it. (*P. 179 l. 1 Sup.*)

An edict of the Emperor Shitsung, of the reigning dynasty, addressed in 1724 to the Eight Bannets of Mongolia, warns them against this rain conjuring: "H. H. and family observes the Emperor, 'offering prayer in sincerity, yet not to fear that it may please Heaven to leave my request unanswered; it is truly incredible that mere common people wishing for rain should at their own caprice set up altars of earth and bring together a multitude of H-shang (Buddhist Bonzes) and Taoists to conjure the spirits to gratify their wishes.'"

The practice of weather conjuring still continues in Tartary, Tibet, and the adjoining countries. And I may note that the word denoting the art has passed into modern Hindustani for conjuring in general (*Jadu* and *Jadugeri*), and that by an odd freak in the history of words *Jadughar*, "The Conjuring House," has come to be the name by which a freemason's lodge is generally known in India.

Weather-conjuring stories were also rife in Europe during the Middle Ages. One such is conspicuously introduced in connection with a magical fountain in the romance of the *Cherrier ou Lyon*:

## MARCO POLO.

“ Et si pant uns bacins de fer  
 A une si longue chaaïne,  
 Qui dure jusqu’an la fontainne.  
 \* Lez la fontainne trouveras  
 i perron, tel com tu verras  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
 S’au bacin viex de l’eue prendre  
 Et desus le perron espanse  
 La verras une tete tanpeste,  
 Qu’an ceste bois ne remanra beste,”  
 &c.                      &c.

The effect foretold in these lines is the subject of a woodcut illustrating a Welsh version of the same tale in the first volume of the *Mabinogion*. And the existence of such a fountain is alluded to by Alexander Neckam. (*De Naturis Rerum*, Bk. II. ch. vii.)

In the *Cento Nouvelle Antiche* also certain necromancers exhibit their craft before the Emperor Frederic (Barbarossa apparently): “The weather began to be overcast, and lo! of a sudden rain began to fall with continued thunders and lightnings, as if the world were come to an end, and hailstones that looked like steel-caps,” &c. Various other European legends of like character will be found in *Liebrecht’s Gervasius von Tilbury*, pp. 147-8.

Rain-makers there are in many parts of the world; but it is remarkable that those also of Samoa in the Pacific operate by means of a *rain-stone*.

Such weather conjurings as we have spoken of are ascribed by Ovid to Circe:—

“ Concipit illa preces et verba venefica dicit  
 Ignotosque Deos ignoto carmine adorat  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
 Tunc quoque cantato densatur carmine coelum  
 Et nebulas exhalat humus.”—*Metam.* XIV. 365.

And to Medea:—

—“ Cum volui ripis mirantibus amnes  
 In fontes rediere suos . . . (another feat of the Lamas)  
 . . . Nubila pello  
 Nubilaque induco, ventos abigoque vocoque.”—*Ib.* VII. 299.

And by Tibullus to the *Saga* (*Eleg.* I. 2. 45); whilst Empedocles, in verses ascribed to him by Diogenes Laertius, claims power to communicate like secrets of potency:—

“ By my spells thou may’st  
 To timely sunshine turn the purple rains,  
 And parching droughts to fertilizing floods ”—

(See *Cathay*, p. clxxxvii; *Erdm.* 282; *Oppert*, 182, *seqq.*; *Erman*, I.



153; *Pallas, Samml.* II. 348 *seqq.*; *Timk.* I. 402; *J. R. A. S.*, VII. 305-6; *D'Ohsson*, II. 614; and for many interesting particulars, *Q. R.* p. 428 *seqq.*, and Hammer's *Golden Horde*, 207 and 435 *seqq.*)

NOTE 7.—It is not clear whether Marco attributes this cannibalism to the Tibetans and Kashmirians, or brings it in as a particular of Tartar custom which he had forgotten to mention before.

The accusations of cannibalism indeed against the Tibetans in old accounts are frequent, and I have elsewhere (see *Cathay*, p. 151), remarked on some singular Tibetan practices which go far to account for such charges. Della Penna, too, makes a statement which bears curiously on the present passage. Remarking on the great use made by certain classes of the Lamas of human skulls for magical cups, and of human thigh bones for flutes and whistles, he says that to supply them with these *the bodies of executed criminals were stored up at the disposal of the Lamas*; and a Hindu account of Tibet in the Asiatic Researches asserts that when one is killed in a fight both parties rush forward and struggle for the liver, which they eat (vol. xv.).

But like charges of cannibalism are brought against both Chinese and Tartars very positively. Thus, without going back to the Anthropophagous Scythians of Ptolemy and Mela, we read in the relation of the Arab travellers of the 9th century: "In China it occurs sometimes that the governor of a province revolts from his duty to the emperor. In such a case he is slaughtered and eaten. *In fact, the Chinese eat the flesh of all men who are executed by the sword.*" Dr. Rennie mentions a superstitious practice, the continued existence of which in our own day he has himself witnessed, and which might perhaps have given rise to some such statement as that of the Arab travellers, if it be not indeed a relic, in a mitigated form, of the very practice they assert to have prevailed. After an execution at Peking certain large pith balls are steeped in the blood, and under the name of *blood-bread* are sold as a medicine for consumption. *It is only to the blood of decapitated criminals that any such healing power is attributed.* It has been asserted in the annals of the *Propagation de la Foi* that the Chinese executioners of M. Chapdelaine, a missionary who was martyred in Yunnan in our own day, were seen to eat the heart of their victim; and M. Huot, a missionary in the same province, recounts a case of cannibalism which he witnessed. Bishop Chauveau, at Tientsinlu, told Mr. Cooper that he had seen men in one of the cities of Yunnan eating the heart and brains of a celebrated robber who had been executed.

Hayton, the Armenian, after relating the treason of a Saracen, called Parwana (he was an Iconian Turk), against Abaka Khan, says: "He was taken and cut in two, and orders were issued that in all the food eaten by Abaka there should be put a portion of the traitor's flesh. Of this Abaka himself ate, and used all his barons to partake. *And this was in accordance with the custom of the Tartars.*" The same story is related independently and differently by Friar Ricold, thus: "When the

army of Abaga ran away from the Saracens in Syria, a certain great Tartar baron was arrested who had been guilty of treason. And when the Emperor Khan was giving the order for his execution the Tartar ladies and women interposed, and begged that he might be made over to them. Having got hold of the prisoner they boiled him alive, and cutting his body up into mince-meat gave it to eat to the whole army, as an example to others." Vincent of Beauvais makes a like statement: "When they capture any one who is at bitter enmity with them, they gather together and eat him in vengeance of his revolt, and like infernal leeches suck his blood," a custom of which a modern Mongol writer thinks that he finds a trace in a surviving proverb. Among more remote and ignorant Franks the cannibalism of the Tartars was a general belief. Ivo of Narbonne, in his letter written during the great Tartar invasion of Europe (1242), declares that the Tartar chiefs, with their dog's-head followers and other *Lolophagi* (!), ate the bodies of their victims like so much bread, whilst a Venetian chronicler, speaking of the council of Lyons in 1274, says there was discussion about making a general move against the Tartars, "*perce qu'il manjunt la char humaine*." These latter writers no doubt rehearsed mere popular beliefs, but Hayton and Ricold were both intelligent persons well-acquainted with the Tartars, and Hayton at least not prejudiced against them.

The old belief was revived in Prussia during the Seven Years' War, in regard to the Kalmaks of the Russian army: and Bergmann says the old Kalmak-warriors confessed to him that they had done what they could to encourage it by cutting up the bodies of the slain in presence of their prisoners, and roasting them!

There is some reason to believe that cannibalism was in the Middle Ages generally a less strange and unwonted horror than we should at first blush imagine, and especially that it was an idea tolerably familiar in China. M. Bazin, in the 2nd part of *Chine Moderne*, p. 461, after sketching a Chinese drama of the Mongol era ("the Devotion of Chaoli"), the plot of which turns on the acts of a body of cannibals, quotes several other passages from Chinese authors which indicate this. Nor is this wonderful in the age that had experienced the horrors of the Mongol wars.

That was no doubt a fable which Carpini heard in the camp of the Great Kaan, that in one of the Mongol sieges in Cathay, when the army was without food, one man in ten of their own force was sacrificed to feed the remainder. But we are told in sober history that the force of Tului in Honan, in 1231-2, was reduced to such straits as to eat grass and human flesh. At the siege of the Kin capital Kaifongfu, in 1233, the besieged were reduced to the like extremity; and the same occurred the same year at the siege of Tsaichau; and in 1262, when the rebel general Litan was besieged in Tsinanfu. The Taiping wars the other day revived the same horrors in all their magnitude.

Probably however nothing of the kind in history equals what Abdalatif, a sober and scientific physician, describes as having occurred

before his own eyes in the great Egyptian famine of A. H. 597 (1200). The horrid details fill a chapter of some length, and we need not quote from them.

Nor was Christendom without the rumour of such barbarities. The story of King Richard's banquet in presence of Saladin's ambassadors, on the head of a Saracen curried (for so it surely was),—

“soden full hastily  
‘With powder and with spysory,  
And with saffron of good colour,”

fable as it is, is told with a zest that makes one shudder; but the tale in the *Chanson d'Antioche*, of how the licentious bands of ragamuffins who hung on to the army of the first crusade, and were known as the *Tafurs*,\* ate the Turks whom they killed at the siege, looks very like an abominable truth, corroborated as it is by the prose chronicle of worse deeds at the ensuing siege of Marra:—

“A lor cotiaus qu'il ont tranchans et afiles  
Escorchoient les Turcs a val parmi les près.  
Voyant Paiens les ont par pièces decoupés;  
En l'aue et el charbon les ont bien quismés;  
Volontiers les manjuent, sans pain et dessalés.”

(*Dell's Pomez*, p. 70; *Ramnad. Rel.* I. 52; *Rennie's Peking*, II. 244; *Ann. de la Pr. de la T.* XXIX. 353, XXI. 298; *Hayton in Ram.* ch. xvi.; *Poc. Quat.* I. 100; *M. Paris*, sub. 1243; *Mé. Asiat. Acad. St. Pétersb.* II. 650; *Cronich. in Ann. Stor. Ital.* VIII.; *Bergm. Nomad. Streifereien*, I. 14; *Carpén*, 638; *D'Onsson*, II. 30, 43, 52; *Wilson's East. Tartaria*, I. 66, 72; *Asiatick*, p. 363 seqq.; *Weber*, II. 135; *Luttrell*, II. de la Pr. de la T. I. 101; *Gesch. Tatarisch* in *Thes. Nov. Anecd.* III. 172.)

NOTE 8. *Bakshi* is generally believed to be a corruption of *Bhikshu*, the proper Sanscrit term for a religious mendicant, and in particular for the Buddhist devotees of that character. *Bakshi* was probably applied to a class only of the Lamas, but among the Turks and Persians it became a generic name for them all. In this sense it is habitually used by Rashiduddin, and thus also in the *Ain Akbari*: “The learned among the Persians and Arabians call the priests of this (Buddhist) religion *Bakshi*, and in Tibet they are styled Lamas.”

According to Pallas the word among the modern Mongols is used in the sense of *Teacher*, and is applied to the oldest and most learned priest of a community, who is the local ecclesiastical chief. Among the Kirghiz Kazzaks again, who profess Mahomedanism, the word also survives, but conveys among them just the idea that Polo seems to have associated with it, that of a mere conjuror or “medicine-man;” whilst in Western Turkestan it has come to mean a Bard.

\* Ar. *Tafur*, a sordid squalid fellow.

The word *Bakhshi* has however wandered much further from its original meaning. From its association with persons who could read and write, and who therefore occasionally acted as clerks, it came in Persia to mean a clerk or secretary. In the Petrarchian Vocabulary, published by Klaproth, we find *scriba* rendered in *Comanian*, i.e. Turkish of the Crimea, by *Bacsi*. The transfer of meaning is precisely parallel to that in regard to our *Clerk*. Under the Mahomedan sovereigns of India, *Bakhshi* was applied to an officer performing something like the duties of a quartermaster-general; and finally, in our Indian army, it has come to mean a paymaster. In the latter sense, I imagine it has got associated in the popular mind with the Persian *bakhshidan*, to bestow, and *Bakhshish* (see a note in *Q. R.*, p. 184 *seqq.*; *Cathay*, p. 474; *Ayeen Akbary*, III. 150; *Pallas*, *Samml.* II. 126; *Levehine*, p. 355; *Klap. Mém.* III.; *Vámbéry*, *Sketches*, p. 81).

The sketch from the life, on p. 291, of a wandering Tibetan devotee, whom I met once at Hardwar, may give an idea of the sordid *Bacsis* spoken of by Polo.

NOTE 9.—This feat is related more briefly by Odoric: "And jugglers cause cups of gold full of good wine to fly through the air, and to offer themselves to all who list to drink" (*Cathay*, p. 143). In the note on that passage I have referred to a somewhat similar story in the *Life of Apollonius*. "Such feats," says M. Jaeschke, "are often mentioned in ancient as well as modern legends of Buddha and other saints; and our Lamas have heard of things very similar performed by conjuring *Bonpos*" (see p. 287). The moving of cups and the like is one of the sorceries ascribed in old legends to Simon Magus: "He made statues to walk; leapt into the fire without being burnt; flew in the air; made bread of stones; changed his shape; assumed two faces at once; converted himself into a pillar; caused closed doors to fly open spontaneously; made the vessels in a house seem to move of themselves," &c. The Jesuit Delrio laments that credulous princes, other wise of pious repute, should have allowed diabolic tricks to be played before them, "as, for example, things of iron, and silver goblets, or other heavy articles, to be moved by bounds from one end of a table to the other, without the use of a magnet or of any attachment." The pious prince appears to have been Charles IX., and the conjuror a certain Cesare Maltesio.

The profession and practice of exorcism and magic in general is greatly more prominent in Lamaism or Tibetan Buddhism than in any other known form of that religion. Indeed, the old form of Lamaism as it existed in our traveller's day, and till the reforms of Tsongkhapa (1357-1419), and as it is still professed by the *Red* sect in Tibet, seems to be a kind of compromise between Indian Buddhism and the old indigenous Shamanism. Even the reformed doctrine of the Yellow sect recognizes an orthodox kind of magic, which is due in great measure to the combination of Sivaism with the Buddhist doctrines, and of which the

~~secrets~~ are contained in the vast collection of the *Jud* or *Tantras*,  
 recognised among the holy books. The magic arts of this code open  
 even a short road to the Buddhahood itself. To attain that perfection  
 of power and wisdom, culminating in the cessation of sensible existence,  
 requires, according to the ordinary paths, a period of three *asankhyas*  
 (or say Uncountable Time  $\times 3$ ), whereas by means of the magic arts of  
 the *Tantras* it may be reached in the course of three *rebirths* only, nay,  
 of one! But from the *Tantras* also can be learned how to acquire  
 miraculous powers for objects entirely selfish and secular, and how to  
 exercise these by means of *Dhārani* or mystic Indian charms.

Still the orthodox Yellow Lamas professedly repudiate and despise  
 the grosser exhibitions of common magic and charlatanism which the  
 Reds still practise, such as knife-swallowing, blowing-fire, cutting off  
 their own heads, &c. But as the vulgar will not dispense with these  
 marvels, every great orthodox monastery in Tibet keeps a *conjuror* who  
 is a member of the unreformed, and does not belong to the brotherhood  
 of the convent, but lives in a particular part of it, bearing the name of  
*Choichong*, or protector of religion, and is allowed to marry. The magic  
 of these Choichong is in theory and practice different from the orthodox  
 Tantrist magic. The practitioners possess no literature, and hand down  
 their mysteries only by tradition. Their fantastic equipments, their  
 frantic bearing, and their cries and howls, seem to identify them with  
 the grossest Shamanist devil dancers.

Sanang Setzen enumerates a variety of the wonderful acts which  
 could be performed through the *Dhārani*. Such were, sticking a peg  
 into solid rock; restoring the dead to life; turning a dead body into  
 gold; penetrating everywhere as air does; flying; catching wild beasts  
 with the hand; reading thoughts; making water flow backwards; eating  
 tiles; sitting in the air with the legs doubled under, &c. Some of these  
 are precisely the powers ascribed to Medea, Empedocles, and Simon  
 Magus, in passages already cited. Friar Ricold says on this subject:  
 "There are certain men whom the Tartars honour above all in the  
 world, viz., the *Baxitae* (i.e. *Bakhtas*), who are a kind of idol-priests.  
 These are men from India, persons of deep wisdom, well-conducted,  
 and of the gravest morals. They are usually acquainted with magic  
 arts, and depend on the counsel and aid of demons; they exhibit many  
 illusions, and predict some future events. For instance, one of eminence  
 among them was said to fly: the truth, however, was (as it proved), that  
 he did not fly, but did walk close to the surface of the ground without  
 touching it; and would seem to sit down without having any substance to  
 support him." This last performance was witnessed by Ibn Batuta at  
 Delhi, in the presence of Sultan Mahomed Tughlak; and it was pro-  
 fessedly exhibited by a Brahmin at Madras in the present century. It  
 is also described by the worthy Francis Valentyn, as a performance  
 known and practised in his own day in India. It is related, he says,  
 that "a man will first go and sit on three sticks put together so as to

form a tripod ; after which, first one stick, then a second, then the third shall be removed from under him, and the man shall not fall but shall still remain sitting in the air ! Yet I have spoken with two friends who had seen this at one and the same time ; and one of them, I may add, mistrusting his own eyes, had taken the trouble to feel about with a long stick if there were nothing on which the body rested ; yet, as the gentleman told me, he could neither feel nor see any such thing. Still, I could only say that I could not believe it, as a thing too manifestly contrary to reason."

Akin to these performances, though exhibited by professed jugglers without claim to religious character, is a class of feats which might be regarded as simply inventions if told by one author only, but which seem to deserve prominent notice from their being recounted, by a series of authors, certainly independent of one another, and writing at long intervals of time and place. Our first witness is Ibn Batuta, and it will be necessary to quote him as well as the others in full, in order to show how closely their evidence tallies. The Arab Traveller was present at a great entertainment at the court of the Viceroy of Khansa (*Kinsay* of Polo, or *Hangchaufu*) : "That same night a juggler, who was one of the Kán's slaves, made his appearance, and the Amír said to him, 'Come and show us some of your marvels.' Upon this he took a wooden ball, with several holes in it through which long thongs were passed, and (laying hold of one of these) slung it into the air. It went so high that we lost sight of it altogether. (It was the hottest season of the year, and we were outside in the middle of the palace court). There now remained only a little of the end of a thong in the conjuror's hand, and he desired one of the boys who assisted him to lay hold of it and mount. He did so, climbing by the thong, and we lost sight of him also ! The conjuror then called to him three times, but getting no answer he snatched up a knife as if in a great rage, laid hold of the thong, and disappeared also ! By and bye he threw down one of the boy's hands, then a foot, then the other hand, and then the other foot, then the trunk, and last of all the head ! Then he came down himself, all puffing and panting, and with his clothes all bloody kissed the ground before the Amír, and said something to him in Chinese. The Amír gave some order in reply, and our friend then took the lad's limbs, laid them together in their places, and gave a kick, when, presto ! there was the boy who got up and stood before us ! All this astonished me beyond measure, and I had an attack of palpitation like that which overcame me once before in the presence of the Sultan of India, when he showed me something of the same kind. They gave me a cordial, however, which cured the attack. The Kazi Afkharuddin was next to me, and quoth he, '*Wallah* ! 'tis my opinion there has been neither going up nor coming down, neither marring nor mending ; 'tis all hocus pocus !' "

Now let us compare with this, which Ibn Batuta the Moor says he

saw in China about the year 1348, the account which is given us by Edward Meltōn, an Anglo-Dutch traveller, of the performances of a Chinese gang of conjurors, which he witnessed at Batavia about the year 1670 (I have forgotten to note the year). After describing very vividly the *basket-murder* trick, which is well known in India, and now also in Europe, and some feats of bamboo balancing similar to those which were recently shown by Japanese performers in England, only more wonderful, he proceeds: "But now I am going to relate a thing



Chinese Conjur'g Extraordinary.

which surpasses all belief, and which I should scarcely venture to insert here had it not been witnessed by thousands before my own eyes. One of the same gang took a ball of cord, and grasping one end of the cord in his hand slung the other up into the air with such force that its extremity was beyond reach of our sight. He then immediately climbed up the cord with indescribable swiftness, and got so high that we could no longer see him. I stood full of astonishment, not conceiving what was to come of this: when lo! a leg came tumbling down out of the

air. One of the conjuring company instantly snatched it up and threw it into the basket whereof I have formerly spoken. A moment later a *hand* came down, and immediately on that another leg. And in short all the members of the body came thus successively tumbling from the air and were cast together into the basket. The last fragment of all that we saw tumble down was the head, and no sooner had that touched the ground than he who had snatched up all the limbs and put them in the basket turned them all out again topsy turvy. Then straightway we saw with these eyes all those limbs creep together again, and in short form a whole man, who at once could stand and go just as before, without showing the least damage! Never in my life was I so astonished as when I beheld this wonderful performance, and I doubted now no longer that these misguided men did it by the help of the Devil. For it seems to me totally impossible that such things should be accomplished by natural means." The same performance is spoken of by Valentyn, in a passage also containing curious notices of the basket-murder trick, the mango trick, the sitting in the air (quoted above), and others: but he refers to Melton, and I am not sure whether he had any other authority for it. The cut on previous page is taken from Melton's plate.

Again we have in the Memoirs of the Emperor Jahángír a detail of the wonderful performances of seven jugglers from Bengal who exhibited before him. Two of their feats are thus described: "*Ninth.* They produced a man whom they divided limb from limb, actually severing his head from the body. They scattered these mutilated members along the ground, and in this state they lay for some time. They then extended a sheet or curtain over the spot, and one of the men putting himself under the sheet, in a few minutes came from below, followed by the individual supposed to have been cut into joints, in perfect health and condition, and one might have safely sworn that he had never received wound or injury whatever. . . . *Twenty-third.* They produced a chain of 50 cubits in length, and in my presence threw one end of it towards the sky, *where it remained as if fastened to something in the air.* A dog was then brought forward, and being placed at the lower end of the chain, immediately ran up, and reaching the other end, *immediately disappeared in the air.* In the same manner a hog, a panther, a lion, and a tiger were successively sent up the chain and all equally disappeared at the upper end of the chain. At last they took down the chain and put it into a bag, no one ever discovering in what way the different animals were made to vanish into the air in the mysterious manner above described."

(*Philostratus*, Fr. Transl. Bk. III. ch. xxvii.; *Mich. Glycas*, Anñ. II. 156, Paris ed.; *Delrio, Disquis. Magic.* pp. 34, 100; *Koeppen*, I. 31, II. 82, 114-15, 260, 262, 280; *Vassilyev*, 156; *Della Penna*, 36; *S. Setzen*, 43, 353; *Pereg. Quat.* 117; *I. B.* IV. 39 and 290 *seqq.*; *Asiat. Researches*, XVII. 186; *Valentyn*, V. 52-54; *Edward Melton's, Engelsch Edelmans, Zeldsaame en Gedenkwaardige Zee en Land Reizen. &c.*



*aangevangen in den Jaare 1660 en geendigd in den Jaare 1677, Amsterdam, 1702, p. 468; Mem. of the Emp. Jahangueir, pp. 99, 102.)*

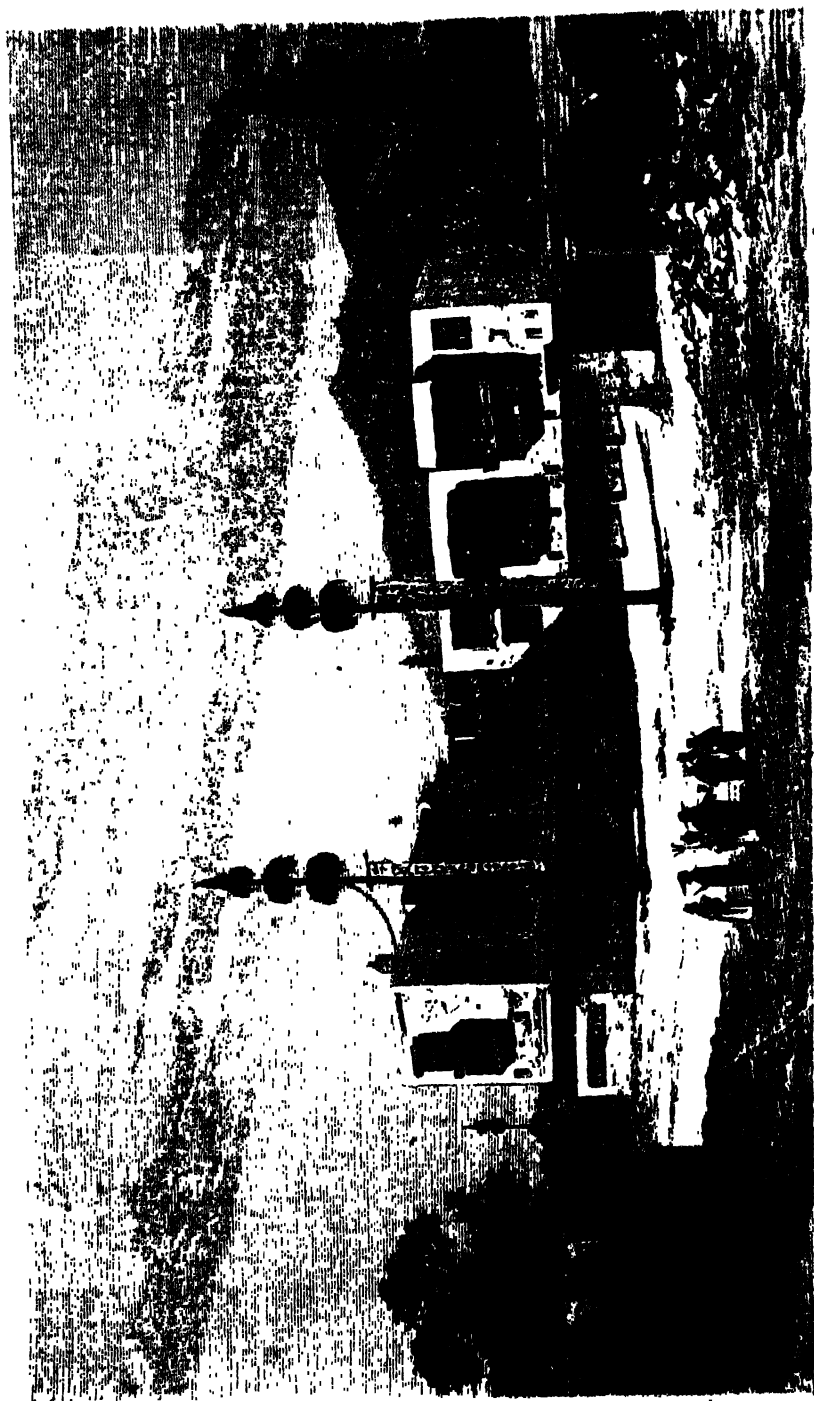
NOTE 10.—There is no exaggeration in this number. Turner speaks of 2500 monks in one Tibetan convent. Huc mentions Chorchí, north of the Great Wall, as containing 2000, and Kúnbum, where he and Gabet spent several months, on the borders of Shensi and Tibet, had nearly 4000. The missionary itinerary from Nepal to L'hasa given by Giorgi, speaks of a group of convents at a place called Brephung, which formerly contained 10,000 inmates, and at the time of the journey (about 1700) still contained 5000, including attendants. Dr. Campbell gives a list of twelve chief convents in L'hasa and its vicinity (not including the Potala or Residence of the Grand Lama), of which one is said to have 7500 members, resident and itinerant. Captain Montgomerie's Pandit gives the same convent 7700 Lamas. In the great monastery at L'hasa called *Labrang*, they show a copper kettle holding more than 100 buckets, which was used to make tea for the Lamas who performed the daily temple service. The monasteries are usually, as the text says, like small towns, clustered round the great temples. That represented at p. 199 is at Jehol, and is an imitation of the Potala at L'hasa. (*Huc's Tartary*, &c. p. 45, 208, &c.; *Alph. Tibetan*, 453; *J. A. S. B.* XXIV. 219; *J. R. G. S.* XXXVIII. 168; *Koeppen*, II. 338.)

NOTE 11.—There were many anomalies in the older Lamaism, and it permitted, at least in some sects of it which still subsist, the marriage of the clergy under certain limitations and conditions. One of Giorgi's missionaries speaks of a Lama of high *hereditary* rank as a spiritual prince who marries, but separates from his wife as soon as he has a son who after certain trials is deemed worthy to be his successor. One of the "*reform*," of Tsongkhapa was the absolute prohibition of marriage to the clergy, and in this he followed the institutes of the oldest Buddhism. Even the *red lamas*, or unreformed, cannot now marry without a dispensation.

But even the oldest orthodox Buddhism had its Lay-brethren and Lay-sisters (*Upāsaka* and *Upāsikā*), and these are to be found in Tibet and Mongolia (*Fox's au Blanc*, as it were). They are called by the Mongols in a corrupt form of the Sanscrit *Ubashi* and *Ubashansa*. Their vows extend to the strict keeping of the five great commandments of the Buddhist Law, and they diligently ply the rosary and the prayer-wheel, but they are not pledged to celibacy, nor do they adopt the tonsure. As a sign of their amphibious position, they commonly wear a red or yellow girdle. These are what some travellers speak of as the lowest order of Lamas, permitted to marry; and Polo may have regarded them in the same light.

(*Koeppen*, II. 82, 113, 276, 291; *Pink*, II. 354; *Erman*, II. 304 *Alph. Tibet.*, 449.)

NOTE 12.—Marco's contempt for *Palarins* slips out in a later passage



Monastery of Lamas.

(Book III. ch. xx.). The name originated in the eleventh century in Lombardy, where it came to be applied to the "heretics," otherwise called "Cathari." Muratori has much on the origin of the name Patarini, and mentions a monument, which still exists, in the Piazza de' Mercanti at Milan, in honour of Oldrado, Podestà of that city in 1233, and which thus, with more pith than grammar, celebrates his meritorious acts:—

"Qui solium struxit Catharos ut debuit UXIT."

Other cities were as piously Catholic. A Mantuan chronicler records under 1276: "Captum fuit Sermionum seu redditum fuit Ecclesiæ, et capti fuerunt cercha c. Patarini contra fidem, inter masculos et feminas; qui omnes ducti fuerunt Veronam, et ibi incarcerati, et pro magna parte COMBUSTI." (*Murat. Dissert.* III. 238; *Archiv. Stor. Ital.* N. S. I. 49.)

NOTE 13.—Marsden, followed by Pauthier, supposes these unorthodox ascetics to be Hindu Sanyasis, and the latter editor supposes even the name *Sensi* or *Sensin* to represent that denomination. Such wanderers do occasionally find their way to Tartary; Gerbillon mentions having encountered five of them at Kuku Khotan (*suprà*, p. 252), and I think John Bell speaks of meeting one still further north. But what is said of the great and numerous idols of the *Sensin* is inconsistent with such a notion, and is indeed, it seems to me, the whole scope of the passage. Evidently, a occasional vagabonds from a far country, but some indigenous sectaries, are in question. Nor would bean and hot water be a Hindu religious diet; the staple diet of the Tibetans is *Chamba*, the meal of toasted barley, which they sometimes mix with warm water, but more frequently with hot tea. It is not probable that these were the elements of the *tan* which Polo speaks of. The Buddhist devotees professed no such diet, and the people sold they mixed with the *tan* of the sect intended in the history of Chinese or Tibetan Buddhism.

Both B. and P. are right in supposing that a general opinion that the *Tan* was a sect, but they have entered into no particulars. In a reference by the former to *Shien-sien*, a title of perfection, alluded to by that sect, the origin of Polo's term *Sensin*. In the substance of this I think they are right. But I believe that in the text this Chinese sect are, rightly or wrongly, identified with the ancient Tibetan sect of *Bon-po*, and that part of the characters assigned belong to each.

First with regard to the *Tan*. These were eminently the *Patarini*, of the Buddhists in China at this time, and Polo was probably aware of the persecution which the latter had stirred up Kublai to direct against them in 1281—persecution at least it is called, though it was but a mild proceeding in comparison with the thing simultaneously practised

in Christian Lombardy, for in heathen Cathay books and not human creatures were the subjects doomed to burn, and even that doom was not carried out.

The term which Polo writes as *Sensin* appears to have been that popularly applied to the Taossé sect at the Mongol Court. Thus we are told by Rashîduddîn in his History of Cathay: "In the reign of Din-Wang, the 20th king of this (the 11th) dynasty, TAI SHANG LAI KUN was born. This person is stated to have been accounted a prophet by the people of Khitá; his father's name was HÁN; like Shák-múni he is said to have been conceived by light, and it is related that his mother bore him in her womb no less a period than 80 years. The people who embraced his doctrine were called شى شى (*Shǎn-shǎn* or *Shinshin*)."

This is a correct epitome of the Chinese story of *Laokiu* or *Lao-tsé*, born in the reign of *Ting Wang* of the Cheu dynasty. The whole title used by Rashîduddîn, *Tai Shang Lao Kiun*, "The Great Supreme Venerable Ruler," is that formally applied by the Chinese to this philosopher.

Further, in a Mongol inscription of the year 1314 from the department of Singanfu, which has been interpreted and published by Mr. Wylie, the Taossé priests are termed *Senshing*.

Seeing then that the very term used by Polo is that applied by both Mongol and Persian authorities of the period to the Taossé, we can have no doubt that the latter are indicated, whether the facts stated about them be correct or not.

The word *Senshing-ud* (the Mongol plural) is represented in the Chinese version of Mr. Wylie's inscription by *Sin-sǎng*, a conventional title applied to literary men, and this perhaps is sufficient to determine the Chinese word which *Sensin* represents. I should otherwise have supposed it to be the *Shin-sian* alluded to by Baldello, and mentioned in the quotations which follow; and indeed it seems highly probable that two terms so much alike should have been confounded by foreigners. Semedo says of the Taossé: "They pretend that by means of certain exercises and meditations one shall regain his youth, and others shall attain to be *Shin-sien*, i.e. "Terrestrial Beati," in whose state every desire is gratified, whilst they have the power to transport themselves from one place to another, however distant, with speed and facility." Schott, on the same subject, says: "By *Sian* or *Shin-sian* are understood in the old Chinese conception, and particularly in that of the Tao-Kiao [or Taossé] sect, persons who withdraw to the hills to lead the life of anchorites, and who have attained, either through their ascetic observances or by the power of charms and elixirs, to the possession of miraculous gifts and of terrestrial immortality." And M. Pauthier himself, in his translation of the Journey of Khieu, an eminent doctor of this sect, to the camp of the Great Chinghiz, in Turkestan, has related how Chinghiz bestowed upon this personage "a seal with a tiger's head and a diploma." (surely a lion's head *P'atah* and *Yarlig*; see

*infra*, Book II. ch. vij. note 2), "wherein he was styled *Shin-Sien* or Divine Anchorite."

One class of the Tao priests or devotees does marry, but another class never does. Many of them lead a wandering life, and derive a precarious subsistence from the sale of charms and medical nostrums. They shave the sides of the head, and coil the remaining hair in a tuft on the crown, in the ancient Chinese manner; moreover, says Williams, they "*are recognised by their slate-coloured robes.*" On the feast of one of their divinities whose title Williams translates as "High Emperor of the Sombre Heavens," they assemble before his temple, "and having made a great fire, about 15 or 20 feet in diameter, go over it barefoot, preceded by the priests and bearing the gods in their arms. They firmly assert that if they possess a sincere mind they will not be injured by the fire; but both priests and people get miserably burnt on these occasions." Escayrac de Lauture says that on those days they leap, dance, and whirl round the fire, striking at the devils with a straight Roman-like sword, and sometimes wounding themselves as the priests of Baal and Moloch used to do.

(*Astley*, IV. 671; *Morley* in *J. R. A. S.* VI. 24; *Semedo*, III. 114; *Demaula*, IX. 410; *J. As.* ser. 5, tom. viii. 138; *Schott, über den Buddhismus*, &c. 71; *Voyage de Khicou* in *J. As.* ser. 6, tom. ix. 41; *Middle Kingdom*, II. 247; *Doollittle*, 192; *Esc. de Lauture, Mém. sur la Chine, Religion*, 87, 102.)

Let us now turn to the *Bonpo*. Of this form of religion and its sectaries not much is known, for it is now confined to the eastern and least known part of Tibet. It is, however, believed to be a remnant of the old pre-Buddhistic worship of the powers of nature, though much modified by the Buddhistic worship with which it has so long been in contact. Mr. Hodgson also pronounces a collection of drawings of Bonpo divinities, which were made for him by a mendicant friar of the sect from the neighbourhood of Tachindu, to be saturated with *Sakta* attributes, i. e. with the spirit of the Tantrika worship, a worship which he tersely defines as "a mixture of lust, ferocity, and mummeries," and which he believes to have originated in an incorporation with the Indian religions of the rude superstitions of the primitive Turanians. Mr. Hodgson was told that the Bonpo sect still possessed numerous and wealthy Vihars (or abbeys) in Tibet. But from the information of the Catholic missionaries in Eastern Tibet, who have come into closest contact with the sect, it appears to be now in a state of great decadence, "oppressed by the Lamas of other sects, the *Penbo* (Bonpo), think only of shaking off the yoke, and getting deliverance from the vexations which the smallness of their number forces them to endure." In June, 1863, apparently from such despairing motives, the Lamas of Tsodam, a Bonpo convent in the vicinity of the mission settlement of Bonga in E. Tibet, invited the Rev. Gabriel Durand to come and instruct them. "In this temple," he writes, "are

the *monstrous idols* of the sect of Peunbo, horrid figures, whose features only Satan could have inspired. They are disposed about the enclosure according to their power and their seniority. Above the pagoda is a loft, the nooks of which are crammed with all kinds of diabolical trumpery; little idols of wood or copper, hideous masques of men and animals, superstitious Lama vestments, drums, trumpets of human bones, sacrificial vessels, in short, all the utensils with which the devil's servants in Tibet honour their master. And what will become of it all? The Great River, whose waves roll to Martaban (the Lu-kiang or Salwen), is not more than 200 or 300 paces distant. . . . Besides the infernal paintings on the walls, eight or nine monstrous idols, seated at the inner end of the pagoda, were calculated by their size and aspect to inspire awe. In the middle was *Tamba-Shi-Rob*, the great doctor of the sect of the Peunbo, squatted with his right arm outside his red scarf, and holding in his left the vase of knowledge. . . . On his right hand sat *Kcumta-Zon-Bo*, 'the All-Good' . . . with ten hands and three heads, one over the other. . . . At his right is *Drcuma*, the most celebrated goddess of the sect. On the left of Tamba-Shi-Rob was another goddess, whose name they never could tell me. On the left again of this anonymous goddess appeared *Tam-pla-mi-ber* . . . a monstrous dwarf environed by flames, and his head garnished with a diadem of skulls. *He trod with one foot on the head of Shakia-tupa* [*Shakya Thubpa*, i.e., 'the Mighty Shakya,' the usual Tibetan appellation of Sakya Buddha himself.] . . . The idols are made of a coarse composition of mud and stalks kneaded together, on which they put first a coat of plaster and then various colours, or even silver or gold. . . . *Four oxen would scarcely have been able to draw one of the idols.*" Mr. Emilius Schlagintweit, in a paper on the subject of this sect, has explained some of the names used by the missionary. *Tamba-Shi-Rob* is "*bstanpa gShen-rabs*," i.e. the doctrine of Shen rabs, who is regarded as the founder of the Bon religion. *Kcum tu-zon-bo* is "*Kun tu-bzang-po*," "*the All-best*."

There is an indication in Koeppen's references that the followers of the *Bon* doctrine are sometimes called in Tibet *Nag-choi*, or "Black Sect," as the old and the reformed Lamas are called respectively the "Red" and the "Yellow." If so, it is reasonable to conclude that the first appellation, like the two last, has a reference to the colour of clothing affected by the priesthood.

The Rev. Mr. Jaeschke writes from Lahaui: "There are no Bonpos in our part of the country, and as far as we know there cannot be many of them in the whole of Western Tibet, i.e. in Ladak, Spiti, and all the non-Chinese provinces together; we know, therefore, not much more of them than has been made known to the European public by different writers on Buddhism in Tibet, and lately collected by Emil, de Schlagintweit. . . . Whether they can be with certainty identified with the Chinese *Taussé* I cannot decide, as I don't know if anything like historical evidence

about their Chinese origin has been detected anywhere, or if it is merely a conclusion from the similarity of their doctrines and practices. . . . But the Chinese author of the *Wei-tsang-tu-Shi*, translated by Klaproth, under the title of *Description du Tibet* (Paris, 1831), renders *Bonpo* by *Taossé*. So much seems to be certain that it was the ancient religion of Tibet, before Buddhism penetrated into the country, and that even at later periods it several times gained the ascendancy when the secular power was of a disposition averse to the Lamaïtic hierarchy. Another opinion is that the Bon religion was originally a mere fetishism, and related to or identical with Shamanism; this appears to me very probable and easy to reconcile with the former supposition, for it may afterwards, on becoming acquainted with the Chinese doctrine of the 'Taossé,' have adorned itself with many of its tenets. . . . With regard to the following particulars, I have got most of my information from our Lama, a native of the neighbourhood of Tashi Lhunpo, whom we consulted about all your questions. The extraordinary asceticism which struck Marco Polo so much is of course not to be understood as being practised by all members of the sect, but exclusively, or more especially, by the *priests*. That these *never* marry, and are consequently more strictly celibatary than many sects of the Lamaïtic priesthood, was confirmed by our Lama." (Mr. Jaeschke then remarks upon the *bran* to much the same effect as I have done above.) "The Bonpos are by all Buddhists regarded as heretics. Though they worship idols partly the same, at least in name, with those of the Buddhists . . . their rites seem to be very different. The most conspicuous and most generally known of their customs, futile in itself, but in the eyes of the common people the greatest sign of their sinful heresy, is that they perform the religious ceremony of making a turn round a sacred object *in the opposite direction* to that prescribed by Buddhism. As to their dress, our Lama said that they had no particular colour of garments, but their priests frequently wore red clothes, as some sects of the Buddhist priesthood do. Mr. Heyde, however, once on a journey in our neighbouring county of Langskar, saw a man *clothed in black with blue borders*, who the people said was a *Bonpo*."

\* The identity of the Bonpo and Taossé seems to have been accepted by Csoma de Kóros, who identifies the Chinese founder of the latter, Laotseu, with the Shen-rabs of the Tibetan Bonpos. Klaproth also says, "Bhonbp'o, Bhaupo, and *Shen*, are the names by which are commonly designated (in Tibetan) the Taoszu, or follower of the Chinese philosopher Laotseu."\* Schlagintweu refers to Schmidt's Tibetan Grammar (p. 209) and to the Calcutta edition of the *Fo-kou-ki* (p. 218), for the like identification, but I do not know how far any two of these are independent testimonies. General Cunningham, however, fully

\* *Shen*, or, coupled with *jin* "gentle."

† of the word *Shen*. . . .  
 available, the same with the etymology we have preferred.

accepts the identity, and writes to me : "Fahian (ch. xxiii.) calls the heretics who assembled at Râmagrâma *Taossé*,\* thus identifying them with the Chinese Finitimists. The *Taossé* are, therefore, the same as the *Swāstikas*, or worshippers of the mystic cross *Swasti*, who are also *Tirthakaras*, or "Pure-doers." The synonymous word *Punya* is probably the origin of *Pon* or *Bon*, the Tibetan Finitimists. From the same word comes the Burmese *Pungyi* or *Pungi*." I may add that the Chinese envoy to Cambodia in 1296, whose narrative Rémusat has translated, describes a sect which he encountered there, apparently Brahminical, as *Taossé*. And even if the Bonpo and the *Taossé* were not fundamentally identical, it is extremely probable that the Tibetan and Mongol Buddhists should have applied to them one name and character. Each played towards them the same part in Tibet and in China respectively; both were heretic sects and hated rivals: both made high pretensions to asceticism and supernatural powers; both, I think we see reason to believe, affected the dark clothing which Polo assigns to the *Sensin*; both, we may add, had "great idols and plenty of them." We have seen in the account of the *Taossé* the ground that certain of their ceremonies afford for the allegation that they "sometimes also worship fire," whilst the whole account of that rite and of others mentioned by Duhalde,† shows what a powerful element of the old devil-dancing Shamanism there is in their practice. The French missionary on the other hand shows us what a prominent place female divinities occupied in the Bon-po Pantheon, though we cannot say of either sect that "their idols are all feminine."‡ A strong symptom of relation between the two religions, by the way, occurs in M. Durand's account of the Bon Temple. We see there that *Shen-rabs*, the great doctor of the sect, occupies a chief and central place among the idols. Now in the Chinese temples of the *Taossé* the figure of their Doctor *Laotseu* is one member of the triad called the "Three Pure Ones," which constitute the chief objects of worship. This very title recalls General Cunningham's etymology of Bonpo.

(Hodgson in *J. R. A. S.* XVIII. 396 seqq. : *Ann. de la Prop. de la Foi*, XXXVII. 301-2, 424-27; *E. Schlagintweit, Ueber die Bon po Sekte in Tibet*, in the *Sitzensberichte* of the Munich Acad. for 1866, Heft I., pp. 1-12; *Koeppen*, II. 260; *Ladak*, p. 358; *J. As.* ser. 2, tom. 1. 411-12; *Rémusat, Nouv. Mém. Asiat.* I. 112; *Astley*, IV. 205, *Doelittle*, 191.)

\* I do not find this allusion in Mr. Beal's new version of Fahian, and the older one I cannot refer to.

† Apparently they had at their command the whole encyclopædia of modern "Spiritualists." Duhalde mentions among their sorceries the art of producing by their invocations the figures of the *Laotseu* and their divinities in the air, and of *making a pencil to write answers to questions without anybody touching it*.

‡ It is possible that this may point to some report of the mystic impurities of the Tantrists. The *Saktidn*, or Tantrists, according to the *Dabistan*, hold that the worship of a female divinity affords a greater recompense (II. 155).



NOTE 14.--Pauthier's text has *blons*, no doubt an error for *blous*. In the G. Text it is *bloies*. Pauthier interprets the latter term as "blond ardent," whilst the glossary to the G. Text explains it as both *blue* and *white*. Raynouard's *Romance Dict.* explains *Bloi* as "Blond." Ramusio has *biave*, and I have no doubt that *blue* is the meaning. The same word (*bloie*) is used in the G. T., where Polo speaks of the bright colours of the Palace tiles at Cambaluc, and where Pauthier's text has "*vermeil et jaune et vert et blou*," and again (*infra*, Book II. ch. xix.) where the two corps of huntsmen are said to be clad respectively in *vermeil* and in *bloie*. Here, again, Pauthier's text has *bleu*. The Crusca in the description of the *Sensin* omits the colours altogether; in the two other passages referred to it has *bioda. biodo.*





## BOOK SECOND.

- (1.) ACCOUNT OF THE GREAT KAAH CUBLAY;  
OF HIS PALACES AND CAPITAL; HIS COURT,  
GOVERNMENT, AND SPORTS.
- (2.) CITIES AND PROVINCES VISITED, BY THE  
TRAVELLER ON ONE JOURNEY WESTWARD  
FROM THE CAPITAL TO THE FRONTIERS OF  
MIEN IN THE DIRECTION OF INDIA.
- (3.) AND ON ANOTHER SOUTHWARD FROM THE  
CAPITAL TO TUCHU AND ZAYTON.



## BOOK II.

### PART I.—THE KAAAN, HIS COURT AND CAPITAL.

#### CHAPTER I.

OF CUBLAY KAAAN, THE GREAT KAAAN NOW REIGNING, AND OF HIS GREAT PULSSANCE.

Now am I come to that part of our Book in which I shall tell you of the great and wonderful magnificence of the Great Kaan now reigning, by name CUBLAY KAAAN; *Kaan* being a title which signifieth "The Great Lord of Lords," or Emperor. And of a surety he hath good right to such a title, for all men know for a certain truth that he is the most potent man, as regards forces and lands and treasure, that existeth in the world, or ever hath existed from the time of our First Father Adam until this day. All this I will make clear to you for truth, in this book of ours, so that everyone shall be fain to acknowledge that he is the greatest Lord that is now in the world, or ever hath been. And ye shall hear how and wherefore.'

Now I am come to singing Seton Chinghiz himself discerned young Kublai, his grandson. On his deathbed he said: "The words of the lad Kublai are well worth attention; see, all of you, that ye heed what he says: for ere long he will sit in my seat and bring you good fortune such as you have had in my day!" (p. 125).

The Persian history of Wussiff thus exalts Kublai: "Although from the frontiers of this country (Türk) to the Centre of Empire, the Focus of the Universe, the genial abode of the Ever-Fortunate Emperor and Just Kaan, is a whole year's journey, yet the stories that have been spread abroad, even in these parts, of his glorious deeds, his institutes, his decisions, his justice, the largeness and acuteness of his intellect, his

## MARCO POLO.

consequence of judgment, his great powers of administration, from the mouths of credible witnesses, of well-known merchants and eminent travellers, are so surpassing, that one beam of his glories, one fraction of his great qualities, suffices to eclipse all that history tells of the Cæsars of Rome, of the Chosroes of Persia, of the Khagans of China, of the (Himyarite) Kails of Arabia, of the Tobbas of Yemen, and the Rajas of India, of the monarchs of the houses of Sassan and Búya, and of the Seljukian Sultans." (*Hammer's Wassaf*, orig. p. 37.)

Some remarks on Kublai and his government by a Chinese author, in a more rational and discriminative tone, will be found below under chapter xxiii., note 2.

## CHAPTER II.

CONCERNING THE REVOLT OF NAYAN, WHO WAS UNCLE TO THE GREAT KAAN CUBLAY.

Now this Cublay Kaan is of the right Imperial lineage, being descended from Chinghis Kaan, the first sovereign of all the Tartars. And he is the sixth Lord in that succession, as I have already told you in this book. He came to the throne in the year of Christ 1256, and the Empire fell to him because of his ability and valour and great worth, as was right and reason.<sup>1</sup> His brothers, indeed, and other kinsmen disputed his claim, but his it remained, both because maintained by his great valour, and because it was in law and right his, as being directly sprung of the Imperial line.

Up to the year of Christ now running, to wit 1298, he hath reigned two and forty years, and his age is about eighty-five, so that he must have been about forty-three years of age when he first came to the throne.<sup>2</sup> Before that time he had often been to the wars, and had shown himself a gallant soldier and an excellent captain. But after coming to the throne he never went to the wars in person save once.<sup>3</sup> This befel in the year of Christ 1286, and I will tell you why he went.

There was a great Tartar Chief, whose name was NAYAN,

a young man [of thirty], Lord over many lands and provinces; and he was Uncle to the Emperor Cublay Kaan of whom we are speaking. And when he found himself in authority this Nayan waxed proud in the insolence of his youth and his great power; for indeed he could bring into the field 300,000 horsemen, though all the time he was liegeman to his nephew the Great Kaan Cublay as was right and reason. Seeing then what great power he had, he took it into his head that he would be the Great Kaan's vassal no longer; nay more, he would fain wrest his empire from him if he could. So this Nayan sent envoys to another Tartar Prince called CAIDU, also a great and potent Lord, who was a kinsman of his, and who was a nephew of the Great Kaan and his lawful liegeman also, though he was in rebellion and at bitter enmity with his Sovereign Lord and Uncle. Now the message that Nayan sent was this: That he himself was making ready to march against the Great Kaan with all his forces (which were great), and he begged Caidu to do likewise from his side, so that by attacking Cublay on two sides at once with such great forces they would be able to wrest his dominion from him.

And when Caidu heard the message of Nayan, he was right glad thereat, and thought the time was come at last to gain his object. So he sent back answer that he would do as requested: and got ready his host, which mustered a good hundred thousand horsemen.

Now let us go back to the Great Kaan, who had news of all this plot.

NOTE 1. There is no doubt that Kublai was proclaimed Kaan in 1260 (4th month), his brother Mangu Kaan having perished during the siege of Hôchau in Szechuen in August of the preceding year. But Kublai had come into Cathay some years before as his brother's Lieutenant.

He was the *fifth*, not sixth, Supreme Kaan, as we have already noticed (Book I. ch. li. note 2).

NOTE 2.—Kublai was born in the eighth month of the year corresponding to 1216. He was the fourth son of Tuli, who was the youngest

of Chinghiz's four sons by his favourite wife Burté Fujin (see *Demailla*, IX. 255, &c.).

NOTE 3.—This is not literally true ; for soon after his accession (in 1261) Kublai led an army against his brother and rival Arikbuga, and defeated him. And again in his old age, if we credit the Chinese annalist, in 1289, when his grandson Kanmala was beaten on the northern frontier by Kaidu, Kublai took the field himself, though on his approach the rebels disappeared.

Kublai and his brother Hulaku, young as they were, commenced their military career on Chinghiz's last expedition (1226-27). His most notable campaign was the conquest of Yunnan in 1253-54. (*Demailla*, IX. 298, 441.)

NOTE 4.—NAYAN was no "uncle" of Kublai's, but a cousin in a junior generation. For Kublai was the grandson of Chinghiz, and Nayan was the great-great-grandson of Chinghiz's brother Uchegin, called in the Chinese annals Pilgutai. On this brother, the great-uncle of Kublai, and the commander of the latter's forces against Arikbuga in the beginning of the reign, both Chinghiz and Kublai had bestowed large territories in Eastern Tartary towards the frontier of Corea, and north of Leaotong towards the Manchu country. Nayan had added to his inherited territory, and become very powerful. Kaidu had gained influence over Nayan, and persuaded him to rise against Kublai. A number of the other Mongol princes took part with him. Kublai was much disquieted at the rumours, and sent his great lieutenant BAYAN to reconnoitre. Bayan was nearly captured, but escaped to court and reported to his master the great armament that Nayan was preparing. Kublai succeeded by diplomacy in detaching some of the princes from the enterprise, and resolved to march in person to the scene of action, whilst despatching Bayan to the Karakorum frontier to intercept Kaidu. This was in the summer of 1287. What followed will be found in a subsequent note (chap. iv. note 6). For Nayan's descent, see the Genealogical Table appended to the Introduction.

### CHAPTER III.

#### HOW THE GREAT KAAH MARCHED AGAINST NAYAN.

WHEN the Great Kaan heard what was afoot, he made his preparations in right good heart, like one who feared not the issue of an attempt so contrary to justice. Confident in his own conduct and prowess, he was in no degree disturbed, but vowed that he would never wear crown again if



he brought not those two traitorous and disloyal Tartar chiefs to an ill end. So swiftly and secretly were his preparations made that no one knew of them but his Privy Council, and all were completed within ten or twelve days. In that time he had assembled good 360,000 horsemen and 100,000 footmen,—but a small force indeed for him, and consisting only of those that were in the vicinity. For the rest of his vast and innumerable troops were too far off to answer so hasty a summons, being engaged under orders from him on distant expeditions to conquer divers countries and provinces. If he had waited to summon all his forces, the multitude assembled would have been beyond all belief, a multitude such as never was heard of or told of, past all counting! In fact, those 360,000 horsemen that he got together consisted merely of the falconers and whippers-in that were about the court!

And when he had got ready this handful (as it were) of his troops, he ordered his astrologers to declare whether he should gain the battle and get the better of his enemies. After they had made their observations, they told him to go on boldly, for he would conquer and gain a glorious victory: whereat he greatly rejoiced.

So he marched with his army, and after advancing for 20 days they arrived at a great plain where Nayan lay with all his host, amounting to some 400,000 horse. Now the Great Kaan's forces arrived so fast and so suddenly that the others knew nothing of the matter. For the Kaan had caused such strict watch to be made in every direction for scouts that every one that appeared was instantly captured. Thus Nayan had no warning of his coming and was completely taken by surprise: insomuch that when the Great Kaan's army came up, he was asleep in the arms of a wife of his of whom he was extravagantly fond. So thus you see why it was that the Emperor equipped his force with such speed and secrecy.

**NOTE 1.**—I am afraid Marco, in his desire to impress on his readers the great power of the Kaan, is here giving the reins to exaggeration on a great scale.

Ramusio has here the following explanatory addition :—" You must know that in all the Provinces of Cathay and Mangi, and throughout the Great Kaan's dominions, there are too many disloyal folk ready to break into rebellion against their Lord, and hence it is needful in every province containing large cities and much population, to maintain garrisons. These are stationed four or five miles from the cities, and the latter are not allowed to have walls or gates by which they might obstruct the entrance of the troops at their pleasure. These garrisons as well as their commanders the Great Kaan causes to be relieved every two years ; and bridled in this way the people are kept quiet, and can make no disturbance. The troops are maintained not only by the pay which the Kaan regularly assigns from the revenues of each province, but also by the vast quantities of cattle which they keep, and by the sale of milk in the cities, which furnishes the means of buying what they require. They are scattered among their different stations, at distances of 30, 40, or 60 days (from the capital) ; and had Cublay decided to summon but the half of them, the number would have been incredible," &c.

## CHAPTER IV.

### OF THE BATTLE THAT THE GREAT KAAH FOUGHT WITH NAYAN.

WHAT shall I say about it ? When day had well broken, there was the Kaan with all his host upon a hill overlooking the plain where Nayan lay in his tent, in all security, without the slightest thought of any one coming thither to do him hurt. In fact, this confidence of his was such that he kept no vedettes whether in front or in rear ; for he knew nothing of the coming of the Great Kaan, owing to all the approaches having been completely occupied as I told you. Moreover the place was in a remote wilderness, more than thirty marches from the Court, though the Kaan had made the distance in twenty, so eager was he to come to battle with Nayan.

And what shall I tell you next ? The Kaan was there

was borne by four well-trained elephants, and over him was hoisted his standard, so high aloft that it could be seen from all sides. His troops were ordered in battles of 30,000 men apiece; and a great part of the horsemen had each a foot-soldier armed with a lance set on the crupper behind him (for it was thus that the footmen were disposed of);<sup>1</sup> and the whole plain seemed to be covered with his forces. So it was thus that the Great Kaan's army was arrayed for battle.

When Nayan and his people saw what had happened, they were sorely confounded, and rushed in haste to arms. Nevertheless they made them ready in good style and formed their troops in an orderly manner. And when all were in battle array on both sides as I have told you, and nothing remained but to fall to blows, then might you have heard a sound arise of many instruments of various music, and of the voices of the whole of the two hosts loudly singing. For this is a custom of the Tartars that before they join battle they all unite in singing and playing on a certain two-stringed instrument of theirs, a thing right pleasant to hear. And so they continue in their array of battle, singing and playing in this pleasing manner, until the great Naccara of the Prince is heard to sound. As soon as that begins to sound the fight also begins on both sides: and in no case before the Prince's Naccara sounds dare any commence fighting.<sup>2</sup>

So then, as they were thus singing and playing, though ordered and ready for battle, the great Naccara of the Great Kaan began to sound. And that of Nayan also began to sound. And thenceforward the din of battle began to be heard loudly from this side and from that. And they rushed to work so doughtily with their bows and their maces, with their lances and swords, and with the arblasts of the footmen, that it was a wondrous sight to see. you behold such fi      vs from this side and from

that, that the whole heaven was canopied with them and they fell like rain. Now might you see on this side and on that full many a cavalier and man-at-arms fall slain, insomuch that the whole field seemed covered with them. From this side and from that such cries arose from the crowds of the wounded and dying that had God thundered, you would not have heard Him! For fierce and furious was the battle, and quarter there was none given.<sup>4</sup>

But why should I make a long story of it? You must know that it was the most parlous and fierce and fearful battle that ever has been fought in our day. Nor have there ever been such forces in the field in actual fight, especially of horsemen, as were then engaged—for, taking both sides, there were not fewer than 760,000 horsemen, a mighty force! and that without reckoning the footmen, who were also very numerous. The battle endured with various fortune on this side and on that from morning till noon. But at the last, by God's pleasure and the right that was on his side, the Great Kaan had the victory, and Nayan lost the battle and was utterly routed. For the army of the Great Kaan performed such feats of arms that Nayan and his host could stand against them no longer, so they turned and fled. But this availed nothing for Nayan; for he and all the barons with him were taken prisoners, and had to surrender to the Kaan with all their arms.

Now you must know that Nayan was a baptized Christian, and bore the cross on his banner; but this nought availed him, seeing how grievously he had done amiss in rebelling against his Lord. For he was the Great Kaan's liegeman,<sup>5</sup> and was bound to hold his lands of him like all his ancestors before him.<sup>6</sup>

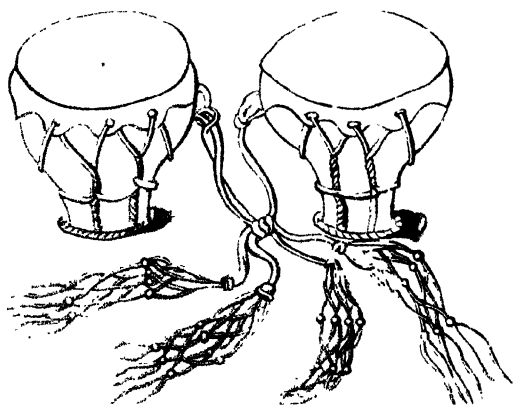
NOTE 1.—“*Une grande bretesche.*” *Brettsche*, *Bertisca* (whence old English *Brattice*, and *Bartizan*), was a term applied to any boarded structure of defence or attack, but especially to the timber parapets

and roofs often placed on the top of the flanking-towers in medieval fortifications ; and this use quite explains the sort of structure here intended. The term and its derivative *Bartizan* came later to be applied to projecting *gûrites* or watch-towers of masonry. *Brattice* in English is now applied to a fence round a pit or dangerous machinery. (See *Muratori, Dissert.* I. 334 ; *Wedgwood's Dict. of Etym.* sub v. *Brattice* ; *Viollet le Duc*, by *Macdermott*, p. 40.)

NOTE 2.—This circumstance is mentioned in the extract below from Gaubil. He *may* have taken it from Polo, as it is not in Pauthier's Chinese extracts ; but Gaubil has other facts not noticed in these.

NOTE 3.—The specification of the Tartar instrument of two strings is peculiar to Pauthier's texts.

I cannot find that this very striking circumstance of the whole host of Tartars playing and singing in chorus, when ordered for battle and waiting the signal from the boom of the Big Drum, is mentioned by any other author. Hammer states it in his account of Mongol customs, but his reference is only to Polo.



The *Nakkara* or *Nakkal* was a great kettle-drum, formed like a brazen cymbal, tapering to the bottom and covered with buffalo-hide—often  $3\frac{1}{2}$  or 4 feet in diameter. The Tartar *Nakkārah*s were usually, I presume, carried on a camel ; but as Kublai had begun to use elephants, his may have been carried on an elephant, as is sometimes the case in India. Thus, too, P. della Valle describes those of an Indian embassy at Ispahan : “ The Indian ambassador was also accompanied by a variety of warlike instruments of music of strange kinds, and particularly by certain *Naccheras* of such immense size that each pair had an elephant to carry them, whilst an Indian astride upon the elephant between the two *Naccheras* played upon them with both hands, dealing strong blows on this one and on that ; what a din was

made by these great drums, and what a spectacle it was. I leave you to imagine.

Ponsville also speaks of the Nakkara as the signal for action: "So he was getting his host in array till noon, and then he made these drums of oxhide to sound that they call *Nakkara*; and then they set upon us by force and foot." The Great Nakkara of the Persians appears from several Oriental histories to have been called *gâghâr*. I cannot find this word in any dictionary accessible to me, but it is in the *Ain Akbari* (*Kotliergate*) as distinct from the *Nakkara*. Abulhasan tells us that Akbar not only had a rare knowledge of the science of music, but was likewise an excellent performer—especially on the *Nakkara*.

The privilege of employing the Nakkara in personal state was one granted by the sovereign as a high honour and reward.

The crusades naturalized the word in some form or other in most European languages, but in our own apparently with a transfer of meaning. Wright defines *Nakir* as "a cornet or horn of brass." And Chaucer's use seems to countenance this:

"Pipes, Trompes, Nakeres, and Clarionnes,  
That in the Battaille blown bloody sounes."

—*The Knight's Tale*.

On the other hand, *Naccherz*, in Italian, seems always to have retained the meaning of *kettle-drum*, with the slight exception of a local application at Siena to a metal circle or triangle struck with a rod. The fact seems to be that there is a double origin, for the Arabic dictionary not only have *Nakkarah*, but *Nakir*, and *Nakir*, "cornet, tuba." The orchestra of Bibars-Bundukdâri, we are told, consisted of 40 pairs of kettle-drums, 4 drums, 4 hautbois, and 20 trumpets (*Nakir*). (*Sir E. Frey*; *Della Valle*, II. 21; *Joinville*, p. 83; *N. et E.* XIV. 129, and following note; Blochmann's *Ain-i-Akbari*, p. 50-51; *Ducange*, b. Haenschel, s.v.; *Makrizi*, I. 173.)



Nakkara, from an Indian original.

NOTE 4.—This description of a fight will recur again and again till we are very tired of it. It is difficult to say whether the style is borrowed from the historians of the East or the romancers of the West. Compare the two following parallels. First from an Oriental history:—

"The *Ar of Heaven* was deafened with the din of the great *Kurkars* and Drums, and the Earth shook at the clangour of the Trumpets and Clarions. The shafts began to fall like the rain drops of spring, and blood flowed till the field looked like the Oxus." (*J. A. S.* ser. 4, tom. xix. 256.)

Next from an Occidental Romance:—

"Now rist grete labour betyng,  
Blawyng of pypes, and ek trumpyng,  
Stedes lepyng, and ek armyng  
Of sharp speres, and avalyng  
Of stronge knighttes, and wyghth metyng,  
Launces breche and increpyng,  
Knighttes fallyng, stedes lesyng;  
Herte and hevedes thorough kervyng;  
Swerdes drawyng, lymes lesyng  
Hard assaylyng, strong defendyng,  
Stiff withstandyng and wighth fleigheyng  
Sharp of takyng armes spoylyng,  
So gret brav, so gret cneyng,  
For the folk there was dreyng,  
So muche dunt, nove of sword,  
The thondur blast no myght beo nua,  
No the sunne hadde beo seye,  
For the dust of the pondre  
We the folkyn ven be myght,  
So was are and may l pyht

*Ch. I. Travaux, in Huber, l. 934*

And again

It was the like of heom to be,  
The folk to be to be,  
The folk to be to be,  
The folk to be to be,

NOTE 5.—The story of the battle of the *Khan* (see note 2, ch. xiv. in Prologue)

NOTE 6.—In continuation of note 4, ch. ii., we give Gaubil's conclusion of the story of Nayan. The Emperor had gone ahead with a small force when Nayan's General came forward with 100,000 men to make a reconnaissance. The Sovereign, however, put on a bold front and though in great danger of being carried off, showed no trepidation. It was night, and an urgent summons went to call troops to the Emperor's aid. They marched at once, the horsemen taking the foot soldiers on the crupper behind them. Nayan all this while was taking it quietly in his camp, and his generals did not venture to attack the Emperor, suspecting an ambush. Failing then took ten resolute men, and on approaching the General's camp caused a fire-*Pro.* to

be discharged ; the report caused a great panic among Nayan's troops, who were very ill-disciplined at the best. Meanwhile the Chinese and Tartar troops had all come up, and Nayan was attacked on all sides : by Liting at the head of the Chinese, by Yusitemur at the head of the Mongols, by Tutuha and the Emperor in person at the head of his guards and the troops of *Kincha* (Kipchak). The presence of the Emperor rendered the army invincible, and Nayan's forces were completely defeated. That prince himself was taken, and afterwards put to death. The battle took place in the vicinity of the river Leao, and the Emperor returned in triumph to Shangtu" (207). The Chinese record given in detail by Pauthier is to the like effect, except as to the Kaan's narrow escape, of which it says nothing.

As regards the *Fire-Pao* (the latter word seems to have been applied to military machines formerly, and now to artillery), I must refer to Favé and Reinaud's very curious and interesting treatise on the Greek Fire (*du Feu Grégeois*). They do not seem to assent to the view that the arms of this description which are mentioned in the Mongol wars were cannon, but rather of the nature of rockets.

## CHAPTER V.

### HOW THE GREAT KAAH CAUSED NAYAN TO BE PUT TO DEATH.

AND when the Great Kaan learned that Nayan was taken right glad was he, and commanded that he should be put to death straightway and in secret, lest endeavours should be made to obtain pity and pardon for him, because he was of the Kaan's own flesh and blood. And this was the way in which he was put to death : he was wrapt in a carpet, and tossed to and fro so mercilessly that he died. And the Kaan caused him to be put to death in this way because he would not have the blood of his Line Imperial spilt upon the ground or exposed in the eye of Heaven and before the Sun.'

And when the Great Kaan had gained this battle, as you have heard, all the Barons and people of Nayan's provinces renewed their fealty to the Kaan. Now these provinces that had been under the Lordship of Nayan were



four in number; to wit, the first called CHORCHA; the second CAULY; the third BARSCOL; the fourth SIKINTINJU. Of all these four great provinces had Nayan been Lord; it was a very great dominion.<sup>2</sup>

And after the Great Kaan had conquered Nayan, as you have heard, it came to pass that the different kinds of people who were present, Saracens and idolaters and Jews,<sup>3</sup> and many others that believed not in God, did gibe those that were Christians because of the cross that Nayan had borne on his standard, and that so grievously that there was no bearing it. Thus they would say to the Christians: "See now what precious help this God's Cross of yours hath rendered Nayan, who was a Christian and a worshipper thereof." And such a din arose about the matter that it reached the Great Kaan's own ears. When it did so, he sharply rebuked those who cast these gibes at the Christians; and he also bade the Christians be of good heart, "for if the Cross had rendered no help to Nayan, in that It had done right well; nor could that which was good, as It was, have done otherwise; for Nayan was a disloyal and traitorous Rebel against his Lord, and well deserved that which had befallen him. Wherefore the Cross of your God did well in that It gave him no help against the right." And this he said so loud that everybody heard him. The Christians then replied to the Great Kaan: "Great King, you say the truth indeed, for our Cross can render no one help in wrong-doing; and therefore it was that It aided not Nayan, who was guilty of crime and disloyalty, for It would take no part in his evil deeds."

And so thenceforward no more was heard of the floutings of the unbelievers against the Christians; for they heard very well what the Sovereign said to the latter about the Cross on Nayan's banner, and its giving him no help.

NOTE 1.—FRIAR Ricold mentions this Tartar maxim: "One Khan will put another to death, to get possession of the throne, but he takes great care that the blood be not spilt. For they say that it is highly improper that the blood of the Great Khan should be spilt upon the ground; so they cause the victim to be smothered somehow or other." The like feeling prevails at the Court of Burma, where a peculiar mode of execution without bloodshed is reserved for Princes of the Blood. And Kaempfer, relating the conspiracy of Faulcon at the Court of Siam, says that two of the king's brothers, accused of participation, were beaten to death with clubs of sandal-wood, "for the respect entertained for the blood-royal forbids its being shed." See also Note 6, Chap. vi. Book I., on the death of the Khalif Mosta'sim Billah. (*Peregr. Quat.* p. 115; *Mission to Ava*, p. 229; *Kaempfer*, I. 19.)

NOTE 2.—CHORCHA is the Manchu country, Nyuché of the Chinese (supra Note 2, Chap. xlv. Book I.). KAULI is properly Corea, probably here a district on the frontier thereof, as it is improbable that Nayan had any rule over Corea. BARSKUL, "Leopard-Lake," is named in Sanang Setzen (p. 217), but seems there to indicate some place in the west of Mongolia, perhaps the *Barkul* of our maps. This Barskul must have been on the Manchu frontier. The reading of the fourth name is doubtful, *Sichuigiu*, *Sichingiu*, (G. T.) *Sichintingiu*, &c. The Chinese name of Mukden is *Shinking*, but I know not if it be so old as our author's time. I think it very possible that the real reading is *Sinchin-tingin*, and that it represents SHANGKING-TUNGKING, expressing the two capitals of the Khitan dynasty in this region, the position of which will be found indicated in the map of this part of Polo's itinerary. (See *Schott, Aelteste Nachrichten von Mongolen und Tartaren*, Berlin Acad. 1845, p. 11-12.)

We learn from Gaubil that the rebellion did not end with the capture of Nayan. In the summer of 1288 several of the princes of Nayan's league, under Hatan (apparently the *Abkan* of Erdmann's genealogies), the grandson of Chinghiz's brother Kajyun, threatened the provinces north-east of the wall. Kublai sent his grandson and designated heir, Teimur, against them, accompanied by some of his best generals. After a two days' fight on the banks of the river Kweilei, the rebels were completely beaten. The territories on the said river *Kweilei*, the *Tiro* or *Torro*, and the *Liao*, are mentioned both by Gaubil and Demailla as among those which had belonged to Nayan. As the Kweilei and Toro appear on our maps as well as the better-known Liao, we are thus enabled to determine with tolerable precision Nayan's country. (See *Gaubil*, p. 209, and *Demailla*, 431 seqq.)

NOTE 3.—This passage, and the extract from Ramusio's version attached to the following chapter, contain the only allusions by Marco to Jews in China. John of Monte Corvino alludes to them, and so does Marignolli, who speaks of having held disputations with them at

## CHAP. VI. RETURN OF THE KAAH TO CAMBALUC.

Cambaluc; Ibn Batuta also speaks of them at Khansa or Hangchau. Much has been written about the ancient settlement of Jews at Kaifungfu, in Honan. One of the most interesting papers on the subject is in the Chinese Repository, vol. xx. It gives the translation of a Chinese-Jewish Inscription, which in some respects forms a singular parallel to the celebrated Christian Inscription of Singanfu, though it is of far more modern date (1511). It exhibits, as that inscription does, the effect of Chinese temperament or language, in modifying or diluting doctrinal statements. Here is a passage: "With respect to the Israelitish religion, we find on enquiry that its first ancestor, Adam, came originally from India, and that during the (period of the) Chau State the Sacred Writings were already in existence. The Sacred Writings, embodying Eternal Reason, consist of 53 sections. The principles therein contained are very abstruse, and the Eternal Reason therein revealed is very mysterious, being treated with the same veneration as Heaven. The founder of the religion is Abraham, who is considered the first teacher of it. Then came Moses, who established the Law, and handed down the sacred writings. After his time, during the Han dynasty (B.C. 200 to A.D. 226), this religion entered China. In A.D. 1164 a synagogue was built at Pien. In A.D. 296 the old Temple was rebuilt, as a place in which the sacred writings might be deposited with veneration."

The synagogue at Kaifungfu has recently been demolished for the sake of its materials by the survivors of the Jewish community themselves, who were too poor to repair it. The tablet that once adorned its entrance, bearing in gilt characters the name ESZLOVIM (Israel), has been appropriated by a mosque. The 300 or 400 survivors seem in danger of absorption into the Mahomedan or heathen population. The last Rabbi and possessor of the sacred tongue died some 30 or 40 years ago, and worship has ceased, and their traditions have almost died away.

*Catholic* 228, 349, 401, 522. *R. A. N.* 430; *Dr. Martin*, in *J. N. China* III. 648, 1866, p. 82, 93.

## CHAPTER VI.

### HOW THE GREAT KAAH WENT BACK TO THE CITY OF CAMBALUC.

AND after the Great Kaah had defeated Nayan in the way you have heard, he went back to his capital city of Cambaluc and abode there, taking his ease and making festivity. And the other Tartar Lord called Caydu was greatly troubled when he heard of the defeat and death of

Nayan, and held himself in readiness for war; but he stood greatly in fear of being handled as Nayan had been.<sup>1</sup>

I told you that the Great Kaan never went on a campaign but once, and it was on this occasion; in all other cases of need he sent his sons or his barons into the field. But this time he would have none go in command but himself, for he regarded the presumptuous rebellion of Nayan as far too serious and perilous an affair to be otherwise dealt with.

NOTE 1.—Here Ramusio has a long and curious addition. Kublai, it says, remained at Cambaluc till March, “in which our Easter occurs; and learning that this was one of our chief festivals, he summoned all the Christians, and bade them bring with them the Book of the Four Gospels. This he caused to be incensed many times with great ceremony, kissing it himself most devoutly, and desiring all the barons and lords who were present to do the same. And he always acts in this fashion at the chief Christian festivals, such as Easter and Christmas. And he does the like at the chief feasts of the Saracens, Jews, and Idolaters. On being asked why, he said: “There are Four Prophets worshipped and revered by all the world. The Christians say their God is Jesus Christ; the Saracens, Mahomet; the Jews, Moses; the Idolaters, Sogomon Borcan [*Sakya-Muni Burkhan* or Buddha], who was the first god among the idols; and I worship and pay respect to all four, and pray that he among them who is greatest in heaven in very truth may aid me.” But the Great Kaan let it be seen well enough that he held the Christian Faith to be the truest and best—for, as he says, it commands nothing that is not perfectly good and holy. But he will not allow the Christians to carry the Cross before them, because on it was scourged and put to death a person so great and exalted as Christ.

“Some one may say: ‘Since he holds the Christian faith to be best, why does he not attach himself to it, and become a Christian?’ Well, this is the reason that he gave to Messer Nicolo and Messer Maffeo, when he sent them as his envoys to the Pope, and when they sometimes took occasion to speak to him about the faith of Christ. He said: ‘How would you have me to become a Christian? You see that the Christians of these parts are so ignorant that they achieve nothing and can achieve nothing, whilst you see the Idolaters can do anything they please, insomuch that when I sit at table the cups from the middle of the hall come to me full of wine or other liquor without being touched by anybody, and I drink from them. They control storms, causing them to pass in whatever direction they please, and do many other marvels;

shall worship God is indifferent ; this was the constant policy of his house in the days of its greatness. Kublai, as Koeppen observes, the first of his line to raise himself above the natural and systematic barbarism of the Mongols, probably saw in the promotion of Tibetan Buddhism, already spread to some extent among them, the readiest means of civilizing his countrymen. But he may have been quite sincere in saying what is here ascribed to him in *this* sense, viz. : that if the Latin Church, with its superiority of character and acquirement, had come to his aid as he had once requested, he would gladly have used *its* missionaries as his civilizing instruments instead of the Lamas and their trumpery. (*Rubr.* 313 ; *Assemani*, III. pt. ii. 107 ; *Koeppen*, II. 89, 96.)

## CHAPTER VII.

### HOW THE KAAH REWARDED THE VALOUR OF HIS CAPTAINS.

So we will have done with this matter of Nayan, and go on with our account of the great state of the Great Kaan.

We have already told you of his lineage and of his age ; but now I must tell you what he did after his return, in regard to those Barons who had behaved well in the battle. Him who was before captain of 100 he made captain of 1000 ; and him who was captain of 1000 men he made to be captain of 10,000, advancing every man according to his deserts and to his previous rank. Besides that, he also made them presents of fine silver plate and other rich appointments ; gave them Tablets of Authority of a higher degree than they held before ; and bestowed upon them fine jewels of gold and silver, and pearls and precious stones ; insomuch that the amount that fell to each of them was something astonishing. And yet 'twas not so much as they had deserved ; for never were men seen who did such feats of arms for the love and honour of their Lord, as these had done on that day of the battle.'

Now those Tablets of Authority, of which I have spoken, are ordered in this way. The officer who is a captain of

100 hath a tablet of silver; the captain of 1000 hath a tablet of gold or silver-gilt; the commander of 10,000 hath a tablet of gold, with a lion's head on it. And I will tell you the weight of the different tablets, and what they denote. The tablets of the captains of 100 and 1000 weigh each of them 120 *saggi*; and the tablet with the lion's head engraven on it, which is that of the commander of 10,000, weighs 220 *saggi*. And on each of the tablets is inscribed a device, which runs: "*By the strength of the great God, and of the great grace which He hath accorded to our Emperor, may the name of the Kaan be blessed; and let all such as will not obey him be slain and be destroyed.*" And I tell you besides that all who hold these tablets likewise receive warrants in writing, declaring all their powers and privileges.

I should mention too that an officer who holds the chief command of 100,000 men, or who is general-in-chief of a great host, is entitled to a tablet that weighs 300 *saggi*. It has an inscription thereon to the same purport that I have told you already, and below the inscription there is the figure of a lion, and below the lion the sun and moon. They have warrants also of their high rank, command, and power.<sup>2</sup> Every one, moreover, who holds a tablet of this exalted degree is entitled, whenever he goes abroad, to have a little golden canopy, such as is called an umbrella, carried on a spear over his head in token of his high command. And whenever he sits, he sits in a silver chair.<sup>3</sup>

To certain very great lords also there is given a tablet with griffalcons on it; this is only to the very greatest of the Kaan's barons, and it confers on them his own full power and authority; so that if one of those chiefs wishes to send a messenger any whither, he can seize the horses of any man, be he even a king, and any other chattels at his pleasure.<sup>4</sup>

NOTE 1.—So Sanang Setzen relates that Chinghiz, on returning from one of his great campaigns, busied himself in reorganizing his forces and bestowing rank and title, according to the deserts of each, on his nine *Orlok*, or marshals, and on all who had done good service. "He named commandants over hundreds, over thousands, over ten thousands, over hundred thousands, and opened his treasury to the multitude of the people" (p. 91).

NOTE 2.—We have several times already had mention of these tablets (see Prologue, chapters viii. and xviii.). The earliest European allusion to them is in Rubruquis: "And Mangu gave to the Moghul (whom he was going to send to the King of France) a bull of his, that is to say, a golden plate of a palm in breadth and half a cubit in length, on which his orders were inscribed. Whosoever is the bearer of that may order what he pleases, and his order shall be executed straightway."

These golden bulls of the Mongol Kaans appear to have been originally tokens of high favour and honour, though afterwards they became more frequent and conventional. They are often spoken of by the Persian historians of the Mongols under the name of *Pāizah*, and sometimes *Pāizah Sir-i-Sher*, or "Lion's Head Paizah." Thus, in a firmān of Ghazan Khan, naming a viceroy to his conquests in Syria, the Khan confers on the latter "the sword, the august standard, the drum, and the *Lion's Head Pāizah*." Most frequently the grant of this honour is coupled with *Yarligh*; "to such an one were granted *Yarligh* and *Pāizah*," the former word (which is still applied in Turkey to the Sultan's rescripts) denoting the written patent which accompanies the grant of the tablet, just as the sovereign's warrant accompanies the badge of a modern Order. Of such written patents also Marco speaks in this passage, and as he uttered it no doubt the familiar words *Yarligh u Pāizah* were in his mind. The Armenian history of the Orpeliens, relating the visit of Prince Sempad, brother of King Hayton, to the court of Mangu Kaan, says: "They gave him also a *P'haiza* of gold, *i.e.* a tablet whereon the name of God is written by the Great Kaan himself; and this constitutes the greatest honour known among the Mongols. Farther, they drew up for him a sort of patent, which the Mongols call *Iarlek*," &c.

Under the Persian branch of the house at least the degree of honour



Seljukian Coin with the  
Lion and Sun.

was indicated by the *number* of lions' heads upon the plate, which varied from 1 to 5. The Lion and Sun, a symbol which survives, or has been revived, in the modern Persian decoration so called, formed the emblem of the Sun in Leo, *i.e.* in highest power. It had already been used on the coins of the Seljukian sovereigns of Persia and Iconium; it appears on coins of the Mongol Ilkhans Ghazan, Oljaitu, and Abusaid, and it is also found on some of those of Mahomed Uzbek Khan of Kipchak.

Hammer gives regulations of Ghazan Khan's on the subject of the Paizah, from which it is seen that the latter were of different *kinds* as well as degrees. Some were held by great governors and officers of state, and these were cautioned against letting the Paizah out of their own keeping; others were for officers of inferior order; and, again, "for persons travelling on state commissions with post-horses, particular paizah (which Hammer says were of brass) are appointed, on which their names are inscribed." These last would seem therefore to be merely such permissions to travel by the Government post-horses as are still required in Russia, perhaps in lineal derivation from Mongol practice. The terms of Ghazan's decree and other contemporary notices show that great abuses were practised with the Paizah, as an authority for living at free quarters and making other arbitrary exactions.

The word *Paizah* is said to be Chinese, *Pai-tseu*, "a tablet." A trace of the name and the thing still survives in Mongolia. The horse-*Bai* is the name applied to a certain ornament on the horse caparison, which gives the rider a title to be furnished with horses and provisions on a journey.

Where I have used the Venetian term *saggio*, the French texts have here and elsewhere *saics* and *saies*, and sometimes *pois*. *Saie* points to *saiga*, which, according to Dupré de St. Maur, is in the Salic laws the equivalent of a denier or the twelfth part of a sol. *Saggio* is presumably the same word, but the *saggio* was a recognized Venetian weight equal to  $\frac{1}{8}$  of an ounce. We shall see hereafter that Polo appears to use it to indicate the *miskâl*, a weight which may be taken at 74 grains Troy. On that supposition the smallest tablet specified in the text would weigh  $18\frac{1}{2}$  ozs. Troy.

I do not know if any gold Paizah has been discovered, but several of silver have been found in the Russian dominions; one near the Dnieper, and two in Eastern Siberia. We give a plate of one of these, which was found in the Minusinsk circle of the Government of Yenisei in 1846, and is now in the Asiatic Museum of the Academy of St. Petersburg. For the sake of better illustration of our text, I have taken the liberty to represent the tablet as of gold, instead of silver with the inscription only gilt. The moulded ring inserted in the orifice, to suspend the plate by, is of iron. On the reverse side the ring bears some Chinese characters engraved, which are interpreted as meaning "Publication No. 42." The inscription on the plate itself is in the Mongol language and Baspa character (*Baspa*, Prologue, note 1, ch. xv.), and its purport is a remarkable testimony to the exactness of Marco's account, and almost a proof of his knowledge of the language and character in which the inscriptions were engraved. It runs, according to Schmidt's version: "By the strength of the eternal Khagan: May the name of the Khagan be holy! Who pays him not homage is to be slain, and must die!" The inscriptions on the other plate discovered were essentially similar in meaning. One was in the Tibetan character.















## CHAPTER VIII

## CONCERNING THE PERSON OF THE GREAT KAAH.

THE personal appearance of the Great Kaan, Lord of Lords, whose name is Cublay, is such as I shall now tell you. He is of a good stature, neither tall nor short, but of a middle height. He has a becoming amount of flesh, and is very shapely in all his limbs. His complexion is white and red, the eyes black and fine,<sup>1</sup> the nose well formed and well set on. He has four wives, whom he retains permanently as his legitimate consorts; and the eldest of his sons by those four wives ought by rights to be emperor;—I mean when his father dies. Those four ladies are called empresses, but each is distinguished also by her proper name. And each of them has a special court of her own, very grand and ample; no one of them having fewer than 300 fair and charming damsels. They have also many pages and eunuchs, and a number of other attendants of both sexes; so that each of these ladies has not less than 10,000 persons attached to her court.<sup>2</sup>

When the Emperor desires the society of one of these four consorts he will sometimes send for the lady to his apartment, and sometimes visit her at her own. He has also a great number of concubines, and I will tell you how he obtains them.

You must know that there is a tribe of Tartars called UNGRAT, who are noted for their beauty. Now every year a hundred of the most beautiful maidens of this tribe are sent to the Great Kaan, who commits them to the charge of certain elderly ladies dwelling in his palace. And these old ladies make the girls sleep with them, in order to ascertain if they have sweet breath [and do not snore], and are sound in all their limbs. Then such of them as are of approved beauty, and are good and sound in all respects, are appointed to attend on the Emperor by

turns. Thus six of these damsels take their turn for three days and nights, and wait on him when he is in his chamber and when he is in his bed, to serve him in any way, and to be entirely at his orders. At the end of the three days and nights they are relieved by other six. And so throughout the year, there are reliefs of maidens by six and six, changing every three days and nights.'



Kublai Kaan, from a Chinese Engraving

NOTE. I.—We are left in some doubt as to the colour of Kublai's eyes, for some of the MSS. read *roux* and *rouis*, and others *noirs*. The former is a very common epithet for eyes in the mediæval romances. And in the ballad on the death of St. Lewis, we are told of his son Pristram—

“Droit fu comme un rosel, Ses *yeux* comme faïçon,  
 Les le rois Moyses ne usqui sa faïçon.”



The word has generally been interpreted *bluish-grey*, but in the passage just quoted Fr.-Michel explains it by *brillans*. However, the evidence for *noirs* here seems strongest. Rashiduddin says that when Kublai was born Chinghiz expressed surprise at the child's being so *brown*, as its father and all his other sons were fair. Indeed, we are told that the descendants of Yesugai (the father of Chinghiz) were in general distinguished by blue eyes and reddish hair. (*Michel's Joinville*, p. 324; *D'Ohsson*, II. 475; *Erdmann*, 252.)

NOTE 2.—According to Hammer's authority (Rashid?) Kublai had *seven* wives; Gaubil's Chinese sources assign him *five*, with the title of empress (*Hoang-heu*). Of these the best beloved was the beautiful Jamui Khátun (Lady or Empress Jamui, illustrating what the text says of the manner of styling these ladies), who bore him four sons and five daughters. Rashiduddin adds that she was called *Kiün Kú*, or the great consort, evidently the term *Hoang-heu*. (Gen. Tables in *Hammer's Ilkhans*; *Gaubil*, 223; *Erdmann*, 200.)

NOTE 3.—*Ungrat*, the reading of the Crusca, seems to be that to which the others point, and I doubt not that it represents the great Mongol tribe of KUNGURAT, which gave more wives than any other to the princes of the house of Chinghiz; a conclusion in which I find I have been anticipated by Bemailla or his editor (IX. 426). To this tribe belonged Burtch Fujin, the favourite wife of Chinghiz himself, and mother of his four heirs; to the same tribe belonged the two wives of Chagatai, two of Hulaku's seven wives, one of Mangu Kaan's, two at least of Kublai's including the beloved Jamui Khatun, one at least of Abaka's, two of Ahmed Tigudar's, two of Arghun's, and two of Ghazan's.

The seat of the Kungurats was near the Great Wall. Their name is still applied to one of the tribes of the Uzbeks of Western Turkestan, whose body appears to have been made up of fractions of many of the Turk and Mongol tribes. Kungurat is also the name of a town near the Sea of Aral, perhaps borrowed from the Uzbek clan.

The conversion of *Kungurat* into *Ungrat* is due, I suppose, to that Mongol tendency to soften gutturals which has been before noticed (*Erdm.* 199-200; *Hammer*, passim; *Burnes*, III. 143, 225.)

The Ramusian version adds here these curious and apparently genuine particulars: -

"The Great Kaan sends his commissioners to the Province to select four or five hundred, or whatever number may be ordered, of the most beautiful young women, according to the scale of beauty enjoined upon them. And they set a value upon the comparative beauty of the damsels in this way. The commissioners on arriving assemble all the girls of the province, in presence of appraisers appointed for the purpose. These carefully survey the points of each girl in succession, as (for example) her hair, her complexion, eyebrows, mouth, lips, and the proportion of all her limbs. They will then set down some as estimated

at 16 carats, some at 17, 18, 20, or more or less, according to the sum of the beauties or defects of each. And whatever standard the Great Kaan may have fixed for those that are to be brought to him, whether it be 20 carats or 21, the commissioners select the required number from those who have attained that standard, and bring them to him. And when they reach his presence he has them appraised anew by other parties, and has a selection made of 30 or 40 of those who then get the highest valuation."

Marsden and Murray miss the meaning of this curious statement in a surprising manner, supposing the carat to represent some absolute value, 4 grains of gold according to the former, whence the damsel of 20 carats was estimated at 13*s.* 4*d.*! This is sad nonsense; but Marsden would not have made the mistake had he not been fortunate enough to live before the introduction of Competitive Examinations. This Kungurat business was in fact a competitive examination in beauty; total marks attainable 24; no candidate to pass who did not get 20 or 21. *Carat* expresses  $n \div 24$ , not any absolute value.

Apart from the mode of valuation, it appears that a like system of selection was continued by the Ming, and that some such selection from the daughters of the Man hu nobles has been maintained till recent times. Herodotus tells that the like custom prevailed among the Adyrmachidae, the Libyan tribe next Egypt. Old Eden too relates it of the "Princes of Moscow." (*Middle Ages*, I. 318; *History*, IV. 168, Rawl.; *Notes on Russia*, Hist. Soc. II. 253).

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE GREAT KAAH'S SONS.

THE EMPEROR KAAN has thus four wives of his twenty-two noble children; the eldest of whom was called CHINKIN for the love of the great Kaan, the first Lord of the Tartar. And this Chinkin is the Eldest Son of the Kaan, was to have reigned after his father's death; but, as it came to pass, he died. He left a son behind him, however, whose name is Temur, and he is to be the Great Kaan and Emperor after the death of his Grandfather, as is but right; he being the child of the Great Kaan's eldest son. And this Temur is an able and brave man, as he hath already proven on many occasions."

The Great Kaan hath also twenty-five other sons by his concubines; and these are good and valiant soldiers, and each of them is a great chief. I tell you moreover that of his children by his four lawful wives there are seven who are kings of vast realms or provinces, and govern them well; being all able and gallant men, as might be expected. For the Great Kaan their sire is, I tell you, the wisest and most accomplished man, the greatest Captain, the best to govern men and rule an Empire, as well as the most valiant, that ever has existed among all the Tribes of Tartars.<sup>2</sup>

NOTE 1.—Kublai had a son older than CHIMKIN or CHINGKIM, to whom Hammer's Genealogical Table gives the name of *Jurji*, and attributes a son called Ananda. The Chinese authorities of Gaubil and Pauthier call him *Turchi* or *Torchî*, i.e. *Dorjé*, "Noble Stone," the Tibetan name of a sacred Buddhist emblem in the form of a dumb-bell, representing the *Vajra* or Thunderbolt. Probably Dorjé died early, as in the passage we shall quote from Wassáf also Chingkim is styled the Eldest Son: Marco is probably wrong in connecting the name of the latter with that of Chinghiz. Schmidt says that he does not know what *Chingkim* means.

Chingkim died in the 12th moon of 1284-5, aged 43. He had received a Chinese education, and the Chinese Annals ascribe to him all the virtues which so often pertain in history to heirs apparent who have not reigned.

"When Kublai approached his 70th year," says Wassáf, "he desired to raise his eldest son Chimkin to the position of his representative and declared successor, during his own lifetime; so he took counsel with the chiefs, in view to giving the Prince a share of his authority and a place on the Imperial Throne. The chiefs, who are the Pillars of Majesty and Props of the Empire, represented that His Majesty's proposal to invest his Son, during his own lifetime, with Imperial authority, was not in accordance with the precedents and Institutes (*Yasa*) of the World-conquering Padshah Chinghiz Khan; but still they would consent to execute a solemn document securing the Kaanship to Chimkin, and pledging themselves to lifelong obedience and allegiance to him. It was however the Divine Fiat that the intended successor should predecease him who bestowed the nomination. . . . The dignitaries of the Empire then united their voices in favour of TEIMUR the son of Chimkin."

Teimur, according to the same authority, was the third son of Chimkin; but the eldest, Kambala, *squinted*; the second, Tarmah (pro-

perly *Tarmabala* for *Dharma-phala*, a Buddhist Sanscrit name) was rickety in constitution ; and on the death of the old Kaan (1294) Teimur was unanimously named to the Throne, after some opposition from Kambala, which was put down by the decided bearing of the great soldier Bafan. (*Schmidt*, p. 399 ; *Demailla*, IX, 424 ; *Gaubil*, 203 ; *Wassáf*, 46.)

NOTE 2.—The Chinese Annals, according to Pauthier and Gaubil, give only *ten* sons to Kublai, at least by his legitimate wives ; Hammer's Table gives *twelve*. It is very probable that xxii. was an early clerical error in the texts of Polo for xii. *Dodeci* indeed occurs in one MS. (that cited by Baldello as Magliab. II.), though not one of much weight.

Of these legitimate sons Polo mentions, in different parts of his work, five by name. The following is the list from Hammer and D'Ohsson, with the Chinese forms from Pauthier in parentheses. The seven whose names are in capitals had the title of *Wang* or "King" of particular territories, as M. Pauthier has shown from the Chinese Annals, thus confirming Marco's accuracy on that point.

I. Jurji or Dorjé (Torchí). II. CHIMKIN or CHINGKIM (Yutsung, King of Yen, *i.e.* Old Peking). III. MANGALAI (Mankola, "King of the Pacified West"), mentioned by Polo (*infra*, chap. xli.) as King of Kenjanfu or Shensi. IV. NUMUGAN (Numukan, "Pacifying King of the North") mentioned by Polo (Bk. IV. chap. ii.) as with King George joint leader of the Kaan's Army against Kaidu. V. Kuridai (not in Chinese List). VI. HUKAH (Hukochi, "King of Yunnan") mentioned by Polo (*infra*, chap. xlix.) as King of Carajan. VII. AGHRUKJI or UKURUJI (Gaoluchi, "King of Siping" or Tibet). VIII. Abaji (Gai-yachi?). IX. KUKJU or GUKJU (Khokhochu, "King of Ning" or Tan-zut). X. Kutuktemur (Hutulu Temurh). XI. TUKAN (Thohoan, "King of Chinnan"). His command lay on the Tungking frontier, where he came to great grief in 1288, in consequence of which he was disgraced (*see Cathay*, p. 272). XII. Tenukan (not in Chinese List). Gaubil's Chinese List omits *Hutulu Temurh*, and introduces a prince called *Gantanpouhou* as 4th son.

M. Pauthier lays great stress on Polo's intimate knowledge of the Imperial affairs (p. 263) because he knew the name of the Hereditary Prince to be Teimur ; this being, he says, the private name which could not be known until after the owner's death, except by those in the most confidential intimacy. The public only then discovered that, like the Irishman's dog, his real name was Turk though he had always been called Toby ! But M. Pauthier's learning has misled him. At least the secret must have been very badly kept, for it was known in Teimur's lifetime not only to Marco, but to Rashiduddin in Persia, and to Hayton in Armenia ; to say nothing of the circumstance that the name *Timur Khaghan* is also used during that Emperor's life by Oljaitu Khan of Persia in writing to the King of France a letter which M. Pauthier has himself republished and commented upon (*see his book*, p. 280).

## CHAPTER X.

## CONCERNING THE PALACE OF THE GREAT KAAN,

You must know that for three months of the year, to wit December, January, and February, the Great Kaan resides in the capital city of Cathay, which is called CAMBALUC, and which is at the north-eastern extremity of the country. In that city stands his great Palace, and now I will tell you what it is like.

It is enclosed all round by a great wall forming a square, each side of which is a mile in length; that is to say, the whole compass thereof is four miles. This you may depend on; it is also very thick, and a good ten paces in height, whitewashed and loop-holed all round. At each angle of the wall there is a very fine and rich palace in which the war-harness of the Emperor is kept, such as bows and quivers,<sup>1</sup> saddles and bridles, and bowstrings, and everything 'needful for an army. Also midway between every two of these Corner Palaces there is another of the like; so that taking the whole compass of the enclosure you find eight vast palaces stored with the Great Lord's harness of war. And you must understand that each Palace is assigned to only one kind of article; thus one is stored with bows, a second with saddles, a third with bridles, and so on in succession right round.<sup>2</sup>

The great wall has five gates on its southern face, the middle one being the great gate which is never opened on any occasion except when the Great Kaan himself goes forth or enters. Close on either side of this great gate is a smaller one by which all other people pass; and then towards each angle is another great gate, also open to people in general; so that on that side there are five gates in all.<sup>3</sup>

Inside of this wall there is a second, enclosing a space that is somewhat greater in length than in breadth. This enclosure also has eight palaces corresponding to those of

the outer wall, and stored like them with the Lord's harness of war. This wall also hath five gates on the southern face, corresponding to those in the outer wall, and has one gate on each of the other faces as the outer wall hath also. In the middle of the second enclosure is the Lord's Great Palace, and I will tell you what it is like.<sup>4</sup>

- You must know that it is the greatest Palace that ever was. [Towards the north it is in contact with the outer wall, whilst towards the south there is a vacant space which the Barons and the soldiers are constantly traversing. The Palace itself] hath no upper story, but is all on the ground floor, only the basement is raised some ten palms above the surrounding soil, [and this elevation is retained by a wall of marble raised to the level of the pavement, two paces in width and projecting beyond the base of the Palace so as to form a kind of terrace-walk, by which people can pass round the building, and which is exposed to view, whilst on the outer edge of the wall there is a very fine pillared balustrade; and up to this the people are allowed to come]. The roof is very lofty, and the walls of the Palace are all covered with gold and silver. They are also adorned with representations of dragons [sculptured and gilt], beasts and birds, knights and idols, and sundry other subjects. And on the ceiling too you see nothing but gold and silver and painting. [On each of the four sides there is a great marble staircase leading to the top of the marble wall, and forming the approach to the Palace.]<sup>5</sup>

The Hall of the Palace is so large that it could easily dine 6000 people; and it is quite a marvel to see how many rooms there are besides. The building is altogether so vast, so rich, and so useful, that no man on earth anything superior to it. The outside of the roof also is all colored with vermillion and yellow and green and blue and other hues, which are fixed with a varnish so fine and exquisite that they shine like crystal, and lend a resplendent lustre to the Palace as seen for a great way

round.<sup>6</sup> This roof is made too with such strength and solidity that it is fit to last for ever.

[On the interior side of the Palace are large buildings with halls and chambers, where the Emperor's private property is placed, such as his treasures of gold, silver, gems, pearls, and gold plate, and in which reside the ladies and concubines. There he occupies himself at his own convenience, and no one else has access.]

Between the two walls of the enclosure which I have described, there are fine Parks and beautiful trees bearing a variety of fruits. There are beasts also of sundry kinds, such as white stags and fallow deer, gazelles and roebucks, and fine squirrels of various sorts, with numbers also of the animal that gives the musk, and all manner of other beautiful creatures, insomuch that the whole place is full of them and no spot remains void except where there is traffic of people going and coming. [The parks are covered with abundant grass; and the roads through them being all paved and raised two cubits above the surface, they never become muddy, nor does the rain lodge on them, but flows off into the meadows, quickening the soil and producing that abundance of herbage.]

From that corner of the enclosure which is towards the north-west there extends a fine Lake, containing foison of fish of different kinds which the Emperor hath caused to be put in there, so that whenever he desires any he can have them at his pleasure. A River enters this Lake and issues from it, but there is a grating of iron or brass put up so that the fish cannot escape in that way.<sup>7</sup>

Moreover on the north side of the Palace, about a bow-shot off, there is a hill which has been made by art [from the earth dug out of the Lake]; it is a good hundred paces in height and a mile in compass. This hill is entirely covered with trees that never lose their leaves, but remain ever green. And I assure you that wherever a beautiful tree may exist, and the Emperor gets news of it, he sends

for it and has it transported bodily with all its roots and the earth attached to them, and planted on that hill of his. No matter how big the tree may be, he gets it carried by his elephants; and in this way he has got together the most beautiful collection of trees in all the world. And he has also caused the whole hill to be covered with the ore of azure,<sup>8</sup> which is very green. And thus not only are the trees all green, but the hill itself is all green likewise; and there is nothing to be seen on it that is not green; and hence it is called the GREEN MOUNT; and in good sooth 'tis named well.<sup>9</sup>

On the top of the hill again there is a fine big palace which is all green inside and out; and thus the hill, and the trees, and the palace form together a charming spectacle; and it is marvellous to see their uniformity of colour! Everybody who sees them is delighted. And the Great Kaan has caused this beautiful prospect to be formed for the comfort and solace and delectation of his heart.

You must know that beside the Palace (that we have been describing), *i.e.* the Great Palace, the Emperor has caused another to be built just like his own in every respect, and this he hath done for his son when he shall reign and be Emperor after him.<sup>10</sup> Hence it is made just in the same fashion and of the same size, so that everything can be carried on in the same manner after his own death. [It stands on the other side of the Lake from the Great Kaan's Palace, and there is a bridge crossing the water from one to the other.] The Prince in question holds now a Seal of Empire, but not with such complete authority as the Great Kaan, who remains supreme as long as he lives.

Now I am going to tell you of the Chief City of Cathay, in which these Palaces stand; and why it was built, and how.

NOTE 1.—*Tarasi* (G. F.). This word is worthy of note as the source form of what has become in modern French *cargois*. The former the latter appears to be merely



a corruption of it, arising perhaps clerically from the constant confusion of *c* and *t* in MSS. (see *Defréméry*, quoted by Pauthier, *in loco*). •

NOTE 2.—The corresponding stores are now outside the walls of the "Prohibited City," corresponding to Polo's Palace-Wall, but within the walls of the "Imperial City" (*Middle Kingdom*, I. 61). See the cut at p. 335.

NOTE 3.—The two gates near the corners apparently do not exist in the Palace as it now stands. "On the south side there are three gates to the Palace, both in the inner and the outer walls. The middle one is absolutely reserved for the entrance or exit of the Emperor; all other people pass in and out by the gate to the right or left of it" (*Trigautius*, B. I. ch. vii.). This custom is not in China peculiar to Royalty. In private houses it is usual to have three doors leading from the court to the guest-rooms, and there is a great exercise of politeness in reference to these; the guest after much pressing is prevailed on to enter the middle door, whilst the host enters by the side (see *Dequignes, Voyages*, I. 262).

NOTE 4.—Ramusio's version, in the dimensions of the palace, diverges enormously from the old MSS. It makes the inner enclosure a mile square; outside of this it puts another of six miles square, and at a mile interval, a third of eight miles square. It is extremely difficult to suggest how such statements should have got into the version. But it is curious that Pauthier's text (which I have corrected by the G. T.), after describing the *outer inclosure* to be a *mile every way*, says that the inner inclosure lay at *an interval of a mile within it!*

NOTE 5.—This description of palace (see opposite cut), an elevated basement of masonry with a superstructure of timber (in general carved and gilded), is still found in Burma, Siam, and Java, as well as in China. If we had any trace of the palaces of the ancient Asokas and Vikramadityas of India, we should probably find that they were of the same character. It seems to be one of those things that belonged to some ancient Panasiatic fashion, as the palaces of Nineveh were of a somewhat similar construction. In the Audience Halls of the Moguls at Delhi and Agra we can trace the ancient form, though the superstructure has there become an arcade of marble instead of a pavilion on timber columns.

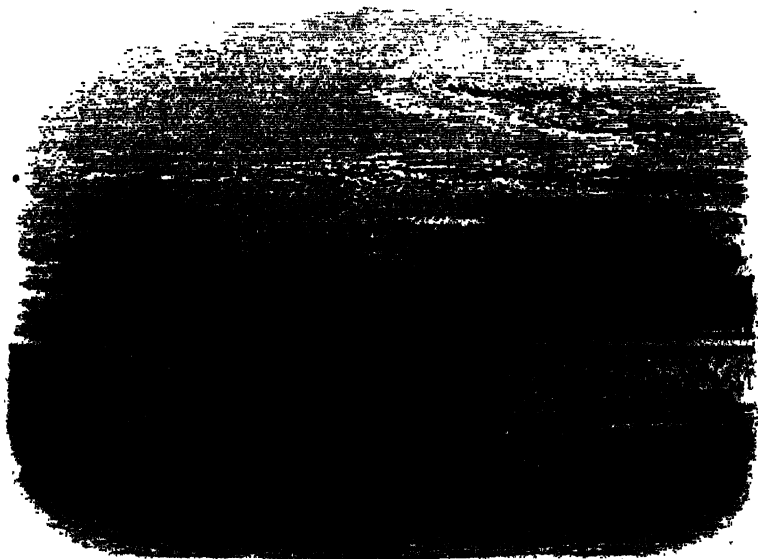
NOTE 6.—"As all that one sees of these palaces is varnished in those colours, when you catch a distant view of them at sunrise, as I have done many a time, you would think them all made of, or at least covered with, pure gold enamelled in azure and green, so that the spectacle is at once majestic and charming" (*Maillaillans*, p. 353).

NOTE 7.—"On the west side, where the space is amplest, there is a lake very full of fish. It is in the form of a fiddle, and is an Italian mile and a quarter in length. It is crossed at the narrowest part, which

corresponds to gates in the walls, by a handsome bridge, the extremities of which are adorned by two triumphal arches of 3 openings each. . . . The lake is surrounded by palaces and pleasure houses, built partly in the water and partly on shore, and charming boats are provided on it for the use of the Emperor when he chooses to go a-fishing or to take an airing" (*Ib.* 282-3). The marble bridge, as it now exists, consists of nine arches, and is 600 feet long. (*Rennie's Peking*, II. 57.)

Ramusio specifies another lake in the city, fed by the same stream before it enters the palace, and used by the public for watering cattle.

NOTE 8.—The expression here is in the Geog. Text, "*Rose de l'azur*," and in Pauthier's, "*de rose et de l'azur*." *Rose Minérale*, in the



Water-Palace at Peking.

terminology of the alchemists, was a red powder produced in the sublimation of gold and mercury, but I can find no elucidation of the term Rose of Azure. The Crusca Italian has in the same place *Terra Azzurra*. Having ventured to refer the question to the high y of Mr. C. W. King, he expresses the opinion that *Rose* here stands for *Roché*, and that probably the term *Roché de l'azur* may have been used loosely for *blue-stone*, i.e. carbonate of copper, which would assume a green colour through moisture. He adds: "Now, according to Pliny, actually used *stannic acid*, the siliceous carbonate of copper, in powder, for staining the clothes, to give the colour the colour of his favourite *Robin*, the *Robin* (to green). There may be some analogy between the *Robin* and that of Robin King. The *Robin* is a very large one."

NOTE 9.—Friar Odoric gives a description, short, but closely agreeing in substance with that in the Text, of the Palace, the Park, the Lake, and the Green Mount.

A green mount, answering to the description, and about 160 feet in height, stands immediately in rear of the palace buildings. \* It is called by the Chinese *King-Shan*, "Court Mountain," *Wan-su-Shan*, "Ten Thousand Year Mount," and *Mei-Shan*, "Coal Mount," the last from the material of which it is traditionally said to be composed (as a provision of fuel in case of siege).\* Whether this is Kublai's Green Mount does not seem to be quite certain. Dr. Lockhart tells me that, according to the information he collected when living at Peking, it is not so,



Distant View of the Green Mount.

but was formed by the Ming Emperors from the excavation of the existing lake on the site which the Mongol Palace had occupied. There is another mount, he adds, adjoining the east shore of the lake, which must be of older date even than Kublai, for a Dagoba standing on it is ascribed to the *Kin*.

In a plate attached to next chapter, I have drawn, on a small scale, the

\* Some years ago, in Calcutta, I learned that a large store of charcoal existed under the soil of Fort William, deposited there I believe in the early days of that fortress.

existing cities of Peking, as compared with the Mongol and Chinese cities in the time of Kublai. The plan of the latter has been constructed (1) from existing traces, as exhibited in the Russian Survey republished by our War Office; (2) from information kindly afforded by Dr. Lockhart; and (3) from Polo's description and a few slight notices by Gaubil and others. It will be seen, even on the small scale of these plans, that the general arrangement of the palace, the park, the lakes (including that in the city, which appears in Ramusio's version), the bridge, the mount, &c., in the existing Peking, very closely correspond with Polo's indications; and I think the strong probability is that the Ming really built on the old traces, and that the lake, mount, &c., as they now stand, are substantially those of the Great Mongol, though Chinese policy or patriotism may have spread the belief that the foreign traces were obliterated.

NOTE 10.—For son, read grandson. But the G. T. actually names the Emperor's son Chingkin, whose death our traveller has himself already mentioned.

## CHAPTER XI.

### CONCERNING THE CITY OF CAMBALUC.

Now there was on that spot in old times a great and noble city called CAMBALUC, which is as much as to say in our tongue "The City of the Emperor." But the Great Kaan was informed by his Astrologers that this city would prove rebellious, and raise great disorders against his imperial authority. So he caused the present city to be built close beside the old one, with only a river between them. And he caused the people of the old city to be removed to the new town that he had founded; and this is called TAIDU. [However, he allowed a portion of the people which he did not suspect to remain in the old city, because the new one could not hold the whole of them, big as it is.]

As regards the size of this (new) city you must know that it has a compass of 24 miles, for each side of it hath a length of 6 miles, and it is four-square. And it is all walled round with walls of earth which have a thickness of full ten paces at bottom, and a height of more than

10 paces; but they are not so thick at top, for they diminish in thickness as they rise, so that at top they are only about 3 paces thick. And they are provided throughout with loop-holed battlements, which are all whitewashed.

There are 12 gates, and over each gate there is a great and handsome palace, so that there are on each side of the square three gates and five palaces; for (I ought to mention) there is at each angle also a great and handsome palace. In those palaces are vast halls in which are kept the arms of the city garrison.

The streets are so straight and wide that you can see right along them from end to end and from one gate to the other. And up and down the city there are beautiful palaces, and many great and fine hostleries, and fine houses in great numbers. [All the plots of ground on which the houses of the city are built are four-square, and laid out with straight lines; all the plots being occupied by great and spacious palaces, with courts and gardens of proportionate size. All these plots were assigned to different heads of families. Each square plot is encompassed by handsome streets for traffic; and thus the whole city is arranged in squares just like a chess-board, and disposed in a manner so perfect and masterly that it is impossible to give a description that should do it justice.]

Moreover, in the middle of the city there is a great clock—that is to say, a bell—which is struck at night. And after it has struck three times no one must go out in the city, unless it be for the needs of a woman in labour or of the sick. And those who go about at night must be bound to carry lanterns with them. And there is a disciplined guard at each gate of the city.





able. If the scale on the War Office edition of the Russian Survey be correct, the long sides measure close upon 5 miles and 500 yards; the short sides, 3 miles and 1200 yards. Hence the whole perimeter was just about 18 English miles, or less than 16 Italian miles. If, however, a pair of compasses be run round Taidu and Yenking (as we have laid the latter down from such data as could be had) *together*, the circuit will be something like 24 Italian miles, and this may have to do with Polo's error.

Polo, again, says that there were 12 gates—3 to every side. Both Gaubil and Martini also say that there were 12 gates. But I believe that both are trusting to Marco. There are 9 gates in the present Tartar city—viz., 3 on the south side and 2 on each of the other sides. The old Chinese accounts say there were 11 gates in Taidu (see *Amyot. Mem.* II. 553). I have in my plan, therefore, assumed that one gate on the east and one on the west were obliterated in the reduction of the enceinte by the Ming. But I must observe that Mr. Lockhart tells me he did not find the traces of gates in those positions, whilst the two gates on the *north* side of the old Mongol rampart are quite distinct, with the barbicans in front, and the old Mongol bridge over the ditch still serving for the public thoroughfare.

When the Ming established themselves on the old Mongol site, population seems to have gathered close about the southern wall, probably using material from the remains of Yenking. This excrescence was enclosed by a new wall in 1554, and was called the "Outer Town." It is what is called by Europeans the *Chinese City*. Its western wall exhibits in the base sculptured stones, which seem to have belonged to the old palace of Yenking. Some traces of Yenking still existed in Gaubil's time; the only relic of it now pointed out is a pagoda outside of the Kwang-An-Măn, or western gate of the Outer City, marked in the War Office edition of the Russian Map as "Tower." (Information from *Dr. Lockhart*.)

The "Great Palaces" over the gates and at the corner bastions are no doubt well illustrated by the buildings which still occupy those positions. There are two such lofty buildings at each of the gates of the modern city, the outer one forming an elevated redoubt. (See cut on next page.)

NOTE 4.—The French writer cited under Note 2 says of the city as it stands: "La ville est de la sorte coupée en échiquier à peu près regulier dont les *quadres* circonscrits par des larges avenues sont percés eux-mêmes d'une multitude de ruës et ruelles . . . qui toutes à peu près sont orientées N. et S., E. et O. Une seule volonté a évidemment présidé à ce plan, et jamais edilité n'a eu à exécuter d'un seul coup aussi vaste entreprise."

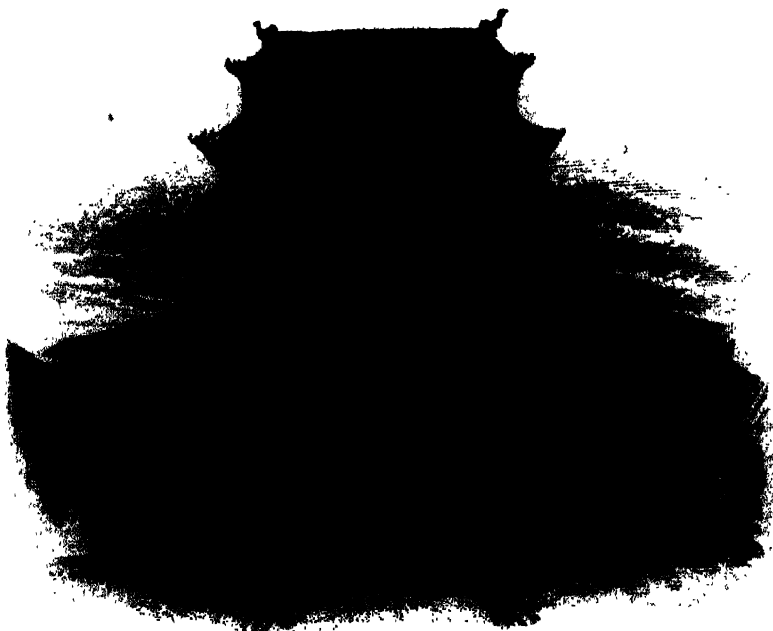
NOTE 5.—Martini speaks of the public clock-towers in the Chinese cities, which in his time were furnished with water-clocks. A watchman



struck the hour on a great gong, at the same time exhibiting the hour in large characters. The same person watched for fires, and summoned the public with his gong to aid in extinguishing them.

The tower indicated by Marco appears still to exist. It occupies the place which I have marked as Alarm Tower in the plan of Taidu. It was erected in 1272, but probably rebuilt on the Ming occupation of the city. In the Court of the Old Observatory at Peking there is preserved, with a few other ancient instruments, which I believe date from the Mongol era, a very elaborate water-clock, provided with 4 copper basins embedded in brickwork, and rising in steps one above the other. A cut of this court-yard, with its instruments and aged trees, also ascribed to the Mongol time, will be inserted below, in Chapter xxxiii. The instruments on the *terrace* of the Observatory are those supplied in later years under the supervision of the Jesuits. (*Atlas Sinensis*, p. 10; *Magaillans*, 149-151; *Chine Moderne*, p. 26; *Tour du Monde* for 1864, vol. ii. p. 34.)

NOTE 6. —“Nevertheless,” adds the Ramusian, “there does exist I know not what uneasiness about the people of Cathay.”



South Gate of Imperial Peking.

HOW THE GREAT KAAH MAINTAINS A GUARD OF TWELVE THOUSAND  
MEN, WHICH ARE CALLED KESHICAN.

You must know that the Great Kaan, to maintain his state, hath a guard of twelve thousand horsemen, who are styled KESHICAN, which is as much as to say "Knights devoted to their Lord." Not that he keeps these for fear of any man whatever, but merely because of his own exalted dignity. These 12,000 men have four captains, each of whom is in command of 3000; and each body of 3000 takes a turn of three days and nights to guard the palace, where they also take their meals. After the expiration of three days and nights they are relieved by another 3000, who mount guard for the same space of time, and then another body takes its turn, so that there are always 3000 on guard. Thus it goes until the whole 12,000, who are styled (as I said) Keshican, have been on duty; and then the tour begins again, and so runs on from year's end to year's end.<sup>1</sup>

NOTE 1.—I have *deduced* a reading for the word *Quescitan* (Keshican), which is not found precisely in any text. Pauthier reads *Questiau* and *Quesitau*; the G. Text has *Quesitant* and *Queccitain*; the Crusca *Questi Tan*; Ramusio, *Casitan*; the Riccardiana, *Quescitam*. Recollecting the constant clerical confusion between *c* and *t*, what follows will leave no doubt I think that the true reading to which all these variations point is *Quescitan*.\*

In the Institutes of Ghazan-Khan, we find established among other formalities for the authentication of the royal orders, that they should be stamped on the back, in black ink, with the seals of the *Four Commanders* of the *Four Kiziks*, or *Corps of the Life Guard*.

Wassáf also, in detailing the different classes of the great dignitaries of the Mongol monarchy, names (1) the *Noyans* of the *Ulus*, or princes of the blood; (2) the great chiefs of the tribes; (3) the *Amirs* of the *Four Keshik*, or *Corps of the Body Guard*; (4) the officers of the army, commanding ten thousands, thousands, and so on.

\* One of the nearest readings is that of the Brandenburg Latin collected by Müller, which has *Quacican*.

Monsieur, in Arabic, and the identical plural form used by our author. He says that, after the sack of Baghdad, Hulak, who had escaped from the polluted atmosphere of the city, sent "Hak Noy and Karabaga, with 3000 Moghul horse, into Baghdad, in order to have the buildings repaired, and to put things generally in order. These chiefs posted sentries from the KISHIKAN (كشيكان), and from their own followings in the different quarters of the town, had the carcasses of beasts removed from the streets, and caused the bazaars to be rebuilt."

We find *Kishik* still used at the court of Hindustan, under the great kings of Timur's House, for the corps on tour of duty at the palace; as even for the sets of matchlocks and sabres, which were changed weekly from Akbar's armoury for the royal use. The royal guards in Persia who watch the king's person at night, are termed *Keshikchi*, and the captain *Keshikchi Bashi*.

Friar Odoric speaks of the four barons who kept watch by the Great Kaan's side as the *Cuthi*, which probably represents the Chinese for *Kiesie* (as in Demailla), or *Kuesie* (as in Gaubil). The latter applied the term to four devoted champions of Chinghiz, and their descendant who were always attached to the Kaan's body guard, and he identifies them with the *Qesitan* of Polo, or rather with the captains of the latter; adding expressly that the word *Kuesie* is Mongol.

I see *Kishik* is a proper name among the Kalmuk chiefs, but I have not succeeded in ascertaining its interpretation. In Kowalevsky, however, I find the following:

(No. 2459) "*Keshik*, grace, favour, bounty, benefit, good fortune, charity."

(No. 2461) "*Keshikten*, fortunate, happy, blessed."

(No. 2541) "*Kishyken*, to be zealous, assiduous, devoted."

(No. 2588) "*Kushiken*, to hinder, to bar the way to," &c.

The third of these corresponds closely with Polo's etymology of "knights devoted to their lord," but perhaps either the first or the last may afford the real derivation.

In spite of the different initials (ق instead of ك), it can scarcely be doubted that the *Kalchi* and *Kalukchi* of Timur's Institutes are mere mis-transcriptions of the same word, e.g. "I ordered that 12,000 *Kalchi*, men of the sword completely armed, should be cantoned in the Palace; 3,000 to the right and to the left, to the front, and in the rear of the imperial iwan; thus, that 1000 of those 12,000 should be every night upon guard," &c. The translator's note says of *Kalchi*, "A Mogul word supposed to mean *guards*." We see that even the traditional number of 2,000, and its division into four brigades, are maintained (see *Timour's Hist.*, p. 206 and 235, 237).

I must add that Professor Vambéry does not assent to the form *Kalchi*, on the ground that this Persian plural is impossible in an old

*Kechiklen*, "the night-watchers," from *Kiche* or *Kichek* (Chag. and Uighur), = "night."

I believe, however, that Persian was the colloquial language of foreigners at the Kaan's court, who would not scruple to make a Persian plural when wanted; whilst Rashid has exemplified the actual use of this one.

(*D'Oshson*, IV. 410; *Gold. Horde*, 228, 238; *Ilch.* II. 184; *Q. R.* p. 308-9; *Ayeen Akb.* I. 270, and *Blochmann's*, p. 115; *J. As.* ser. 4, tom. xix. 276; *Olearius*, ed. 1659, I. 656; *Cathay*, 135; *Demailla*, ix. 106; *Gaubil*, p. 6; *Pallas, Samml.* I. 357)

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE FASHION OF THE GREAT KAAH'S TABLE AT HIS HIGH FEASTS.

AND when the Great Kaan sits at table on any great court occasion, it is in this fashion. His table is elevated a good deal above the others, and he sits at the north end of the hall, looking towards the south, with his chief wife beside him on the left. On his right sit his sons and his nephews, and other kinsmen of the Blood Imperial, but lower, so that their heads are on a level with the Emperor's feet. And then the other Barons sit at other tables lower still. So also with the women; for all the wives of the Lord's sons, and of his nephews and other kinsmen, sit at the lower table to his right; and below them again the ladies of the other Barons and Knights, each in the place assigned by the Lord's orders. The tables are so disposed that the Emperor can see the whole of them from end to end, many as they are. [Further, you are not to suppose that everybody sits at table; on the contrary, the greater part of the soldiers and their officers sit at their meal in the hall on the carpets.] Outside the hall will be found more than 40,000 people; for there is a great concourse of folk bringing presents to the Lord, or come from foreign countries with curiosities.

In a certain part of the hall near where the Great Kaan holds his table, there [is set a large and very beautiful piece of workmanship in the form of a square coffer, or buffet,

about three paces each way, exquisitely wrought with figures of animals, finely carved and gilt. The middle is hollow, and in it] stands a great vessel of pure gold, holding as much<sup>a</sup> as an ordinary butt; and at each corner of the great vessel is one of smaller size [of the capacity of a firkin], and from the former the wine or beverage flavoured with fine and costly spices is drawn off into the latter. [And on the buffet aforesaid are set all the Lord's drinking vessels, among which are certain pitchers of the finest gold,] which are called *verniques*,<sup>2</sup> and are big enough to hold drink for eight or ten persons. And one of these is put between every two persons, besides a couple of golden cups with handles, so that every man helps himself from the pitcher that stands between him and his neighbour. And the ladies are supplied in the same way. The value of these pitchers and cups is something immense; in fact, the Great Kaan has such a quantity of this kind of plate, and of gold and silver in other shapes, as no one ever before saw or heard tell of, or could believe.<sup>3</sup>

[There are certain Barons specially deputed to see that foreigners, who do not know the customs of the Court, are provided with places suited to their rank; and these Barons are continually moving to and fro in the hall, looking to the wants of the guests at table, and causing the servants to supply them promptly with wine, milk, meat, or whatever they lack. At every door of the hall (or, indeed, wherever the Emperor may be) there stand a couple of big men like giants, one on each side, armed with staves. Their business is to see that no one steps upon the threshold in entering, and if this does happen, they strip the offender of his clothes, and he must pay a forfeit to have them back again; or in lieu of taking his clothes, they give him a certain number of blows. If they are foreigners ignorant of the order, then there are Barons appointed to introduce them, and explain it to them. They think, in fact, that it brings bad luck<sup>a</sup> if any one touches the threshold. How-

beit, they are not expected to stick at this in going forth again, for at that time some are like to be the worse for liquor, and incapable of looking to their steps.<sup>4]</sup>

And you must know that those who wait upon the Great Kaan with his dishes and his drink are some of the great Barons. They have the mouth and nose muffled with fine napkins of silk and gold, so that no breath nor odour from their persons should taint the dish or the goblet presented to the Lord. And when the Emperor is going to drink, all the musical instruments, of which he has vast store of every kind, begin to play. And when he takes the cup all the Barons and the rest of the company drop on their knees and make the deepest obeisance before him, and then the Emperor doth drink. But each time that he does so the whole ceremony is repeated.<sup>5</sup>

I will say nought about the dishes, as you may easily conceive that there is a great plenty of every possible kind. But you should know that in every case where a Baron or Knight dines at those tables, their wives also dine there with the other ladies. And when all have dined and the tables have been removed, then come in a great number of players and jugglers, adepts at all sorts of wonderful feats,<sup>6</sup> and perform before the Emperor and the rest of the company, creating great diversion and mirth, so that everybody is full of laughter and enjoyment. And when the performance is over, the company breaks up and every one goes to his quarters.

NOTE 1.—We are to conceive of rows of small tables, at each of which were set probably but two guests. This seems to be the modern Chinese practice, and to go back to some very old accounts of the Tartar nations. Such tables we find in use in the 10th century, at the court of the King of Bolghar (see *Prologue*, note 2, chap. ii.), and at the Chinese entertainments to Shah Rukh's embassy in the 15th century.

NOTE 2.—This word (G. T. and Ram.) is in the *Crusca* Italian transformed into an adjective, "*vaselle vernicate d'oro*," and both Marsden and Pauthier have substantially adopted the same interpretation, which

seems to me in contradiction with the text. In Pauthier's text the word is *vernigal*, pl. *vernigaux*, which he explains, I know not on what authority, as "*coupes sans anses vernies ou laquées d'or.*" There is, indeed, a Venetian sea-term *Vernegal*, applied to a wooden bowl in which the mess of the ship's company is put, and it seems possible that this word may have been substituted for the unknown *Vernique*. I suspect the latter was some Oriental term, but I can find nothing nearer than the Persian *Bārni*; Ar. *Al-bārniya*, "vas fictile in quo quid recondundunt," whence the Spanish word *Albornia*, "a great glazed vessel in the shape of a bowl, with handles." So far as regards the form, the change of *Bārniya* into *Vernique* would be quite analogous to that change of *Hundwānīy* into *Ondanique*, which we have already met with. (See *Dozy et Engelmann, Glos. des Mots Espagnols*, &c., 2nd ed., 1867, p. 73; and *Boerio, Diz. del. Dial. Venez.*)

A few lines above we have "of the capacity of a *firkin*." The word is *bigoncio*, which is explained in the *Vocab. Univ. Ital.* as a kind of tub used in the vintage, and containing 3 *mine* each of half a *stajo*. This seems to point to the *Tuscan* mina, or half *stajo*, which is =  $\frac{1}{2}$  of a bushel. Hence the *bigoncio* would = a bushel, or, in old liquid measure, about a firkin.

NOTE 3.—A buffet, with flacons of liquor and goblets, was an essential feature in the palace halls or tents of the Mongols and other Asiatic races in all manners. The ambassadors of the Emperor Justin relate that in the middle of the pavilion of Dizabulus, the Khan of the Turks, "were set out drinking-vessels, and flacons and great jars, all of gold, corresponding to the *coupes* (or *hanas à mances*), the *verniques*, and *petits flacons* and *petites betteres* of Polo's account. Rubruquis describes that in Khan's tent a buffet near the entrance, where *Kumiz* was set out, and great goblets of gold and silver, &c., and the like at the court of Kaan. At a festival at the court of Oljaitu, we find that "before the throne stood golden buffets . . . set out with full flasks of *Kumiz*." Even in the private huts of the Mongols there was a buffet of chamberlain exhibiting a skin of *Kumiz*, with other kinds of drink and cups standing ready; and in a later age at the banquets of Shah Abbas we find the great buffet in a slightly different form, and the golden flacon set to every two persons, though it no longer contained the liquor, which was handed round. (*Cathay, chap. ccl*; *Rubr.* 221, 208, 305; *Hch.* II. 183; *Del'a Valle*, I. 654 and 750—1.)

Odoric describes the great jar of liquor in the middle of the palace hall, but in his time it was made of a great mass of jade (p. 130).

NOTE 4.—This etiquette is specially noticed also by Odoric, as well as by Makrizi, by Rubruquis, and by Plano Carpini. To the latter the breach of it was liable prohibition to tread on the threshold.

Mahomedan account of an embassy to the court of Barka Khan. And in regard to the tents, Rubruquis says he was warned not to touch the ropes, for these were regarded as representing the threshold. A Russo-Mongol author of our day says that the memory of this etiquette or superstition is still preserved by a Mongol proverb: "Step not on the threshold; it is a sin!" But among some of the Mongols more than this survives, as is evident from a passage in Mr. Michie's narrative: "There is a right and a wrong way of approaching a *yourt* also. Outside the door there are generally ropes lying on the ground, held down by stakes, for the purpose of tying up the animals when they want to keep them together. There is a way of getting over or round these ropes that I never learned, but on one occasion the ignorant breach of the rule on our part excluded us from the hospitality of the family." The feeling or superstition was in full force in Persia some centuries ago, at least in regard to the threshold of the king's palace. It was held a sin to tread upon it in entering. (*Cathay*, 132; *Rubr.* 255, 268, 319; *Plan. Carp.* 625, 741; *Makrizi*, I. 214; *Mel. Asiat. Ac. St. Petersb.* II. 660; *The Siberian Overland Route*, p. 97; *P. Della Valle*, II. 171.)

NOTE 5.—Some of these etiquettes were probably rather Chinese than Mongol, for the regulations of the court of Kublai apparently combined the two. In the visit of Shah Rukh's ambassadors to the court of the Emperor Chingtsu of the Ming dynasty in 1421, we are told that by the side of the throne, at an imperial banquet, "there stood two eunuchs, each having a band of thick paper over his mouth, and extending to the tips of his ears . . . Every time that a dish, or a cup of *darassun* (rice wine) was brought to the emperor, all the music sounded." (*N. et Ext.* XIV. 408, 409.)

NOTE 6.—"*Jougleours et entregetours de maintes plusieurs manieres de granz experimenz*" (P.); "*de Giuculer et de Tregiteor*" (G. T.). Ital. *Tragettatore*, a juggler; Romance, *Trasjitar*, *Tragitar*, to juggle. Thus Chaucer:—

"There saw I playing Jogelours,  
Magiciens, and *Tragetours*,  
And Phetonisses, Charmeresses,  
Old Witches, Sorceresses," &c.  
—*House of Fame*, III. 169.

And again:—

"For oft at festes have I wel heard say  
That *Tregetours* within an halle large  
Have made comé in a water and a barge,  
And in the halle rowen up and down;  
Somtime hath semed come a grim leoun.

Somtime a Castel al of lime and ston,  
And whan hem liketh, voideth it anon."  
—*The Franklin's Tale*, II. 454.

Performances of this kind at Chinese festivities have already been



spoken of in note 9 to ch. lxi. of Book I. Shah Rukh's people, Odoric, and Ysbrandt Ides, &c., describe them also. The practice of introducing such *artistes* into the dining-hall after dinner seems in that age to have been usual also in Europe. See, for example, *Wright's Domestic Manners*, p. 165<sup>2</sup>-6, and the Court of the Emperor Frederick II., in *Kington's Life* of that prince, I. 470. (See also *N. et E.* XIV. 410; *Cathay*, 143; *Ysb. Ides*, p. 95.)

## CHAPTER XIV.

CONCERNING THE GREAT FEAST HELD BY THE GRAND KAAH EVERY YEAR ON HIS BIRTHDAY.

You must know that the Tartars keep high festival yearly on their birthdays. And the Great Kaan was born on the 28th day of the September moon, so on that day is held the greatest feast of the year at the Kaan's Court, always excepting that which he holds on New Year's Day, of which I shall tell you afterwards.

Now, on his birthday, the Great Kaan dresses in the best of his robes, all wrought with beaten gold;<sup>2</sup> and full 12,000 Barons and Knights on that day come forth dressed in robes of the same colour, and precisely like those of the Great Kaan, except that they are not so costly; but still they are all of the same colour as his, and are also of silk and gold. Every man so clothed has also a girdle of gold; and this as well as the dress is given him by the Sovereign. And I will aver that there are some of these suits decked with so many pearls and precious stones that a single suit shall be worth full 10,000 golden bezants.

And of such raiment there are several sets. For you must know that the Great Kaan, thirteen times in the year, presents to his Barons and Knights such suits of raiment as I am speaking of.<sup>3</sup> And on each occasion they wear the same colour that he does, a different colour being assigned to each festival. Hence you may see what a huge business

it is, and that there is no prince in the world but he alone who could keep up such customs as these.

On his birthday also, all the Tartars in the world, and all the countries and governments that owe allegiance to the Kaan, offer him great presents according to their several ability, and as prescription or orders have fixed the amount. And many other persons also come with great presents to the Kaan, in order to beg for some employment from him. And the Great Kaan has chosen twelve Barons on whom is laid the charge of assigning to each of these supplicants a suitable answer.

On this day likewise all the Idolaters, all the Saracens, and all the Christians and other descriptions of people make great and solemn devotions, with much chaunting and lighting of lamps and burning of incense, each to the God whom He doth worship, praying that He would save the Emperor, and grant him long life and health and happiness.

And thus, as I have related, is celebrated the joyous feast of the Kaan's birthday.

Now I will tell you of another festival which the Kaan holds at the New Year, and which is called the White Feast.

NOTE 1.—The Chinese Year commences, according to Duhalde, with the New Moon nearest to the Sun's Passage of the middle point of Aquarius; according to Pauthier, with the new moon immediately preceding the Sun's entry into Pisces. (These would almost always be identical, but not always.) Generally speaking, the first month will include part of February and part of March. The eighth month will then be September-October, and we learn from Polo that the Kaan was born on the 28th of that month (*ante*, ch. ii. note 2).

NOTE 2.—The expression "*â or batuz*" as here applied to robes, is common among the medieval poets and romance-writers, e.g. Chaucer :—

"Full yong he was and merry of thought,  
And in samette with birdes wrought  
And with gold beaten full fetously,  
His bodie was clad full richely."—*Rom. of the Rose*, 836-839.

thinks that in a stuff so termed the gold wire was beaten out

after the execution of the embroidery, a process which widened the metallic surface and gave great richness of appearance. The fact was rather however, according to Dr. Rock, that the gold used in weaving such tissues was *not* wire but beaten sheets of gold cut into narrow strips. This would seem sufficient to explain the term "beaten gold," though Dr. Rock in another passage refers it to a custom which he alleges of sewing goldsmith's work upon robes. (*Fr. Michel, Recherches*, II. 389, also I. 371; *Rock's Catalogue*, pp. xxv, xxix, xxxviii, cvi.)

NOTE 3.—The number of these festivals and distributions of dresses is *thirteen* in all the old texts, except the Latin of the Geog. Soc., which has *twelve*. Thirteen would seem therefore to have been in the original copy. And the Ramusian version expands this by saying, "Thirteen great feasts that the Tartars keep with much solemnity to each of the thirteen moons of the year."\* It is possible, however, that this latter sentence is an interpolated gloss; for, besides the improbability of munificence so frequent, Pauthier has shown some good reasons why *thirteen* should be regarded as an error for *three*. The official History of the Mongol Dynasty, which he quotes, gives a detail of raiment distributed in presents on great state occasions *three* times a year. Such a mistake might easily have originated in the first dictation, *treize* substituted for *trois*, or rather for the old form *tres*; but we must note that the number 13 is repeated and corroborated in Chapter xvi. Odoric speaks of *four* great yearly festivals, but there are obvious errors in what he says on this subject. Hammer says the great Mongol Feasts were three, viz. New Year's Day, the Kaan's Birthday, and the Feast of the Herds.

Something like the changes of costume here spoken of is mentioned by Rubruquis at a great festival of four days' duration at the court of Mangu Kaan. "Each day of the four they appeared in different raiment, suits of which were given them for each day of a different colour, but everything on the same day of one colour, from the boots to the turban." So also Carpini says regarding the assemblies of the Mongol nobles at the inauguration of Kuyuk Kaan: "The first day they were all clad in white pourpre (*adhis purpuris*, see Bk. I. ch. vi. note 4), the second day in ruby pourpre, the third day in blue pourpre, the fourth day in the finest baudekins." (*Cathay*, 141; *Rubr.* 368; *Pl. Car.* 755.)

\* There are thirteen months to the Chinese year in seven years out of every nineteen.

## CHAPTER XV.

OF THE GREAT FESTIVAL WHICH THE KAAH HOLDS ON NEW YEAR'S DAY.

THE beginning of their New Year is the month of February, and on that occasion the Great Kaan and all his subjects make such a Feast as I now shall describe.

It is the custom that on this occasion the Kaan and all his subjects should be clothed entirely in white; so, that day, everybody is in white, men and women, great and small. And this is done in order that they may thrive all through the year, for they deem that white clothing is lucky.<sup>1</sup> On that day also all the people of all the provinces and governments and kingdoms and countries that own allegiance to the Kaan bring him great presents of gold and silver, and pearls and gems, and rich textures of divers kinds. And this they do that the Emperor throughout the year may have abundance of treasure and enjoyment without care. And the people also make presents to each other of white things, and embrace and kiss and make merry, and wish each other happiness and good luck for the coming year. On that day, I can assure you, among the customary presents there shall be offered to the Kaan from various quarters more than 100,000 white horses, beautiful animals, and richly caparisoned. [And you must know 'tis their custom in offering presents to the Great Kaan (at least when the province making the present is able to do so), to present nine times nine articles. For instance, if a province sends horses, it sends nine times nine or 81 horses; of gold, nine times nine pieces of gold, and so with stuffs or whatever else the present may consist of.]<sup>2</sup>

On that day also, the whole of the Kaan's elephants, amounting fully to 5000 in number, are exhibited, all covered with rich and gay housings of inlaid cloth representing beasts and birds, and each of them carries on his back two splendid coffers; all of these being filled with

the Emperor's plate and other costly furniture required for the Court on the occasion of the White Feast.' And these are followed by a vast number of camels which are likewise covered with rich housings and laden with things needful for the Feast. All these are paraded before the Emperor, and it makes the finest sight in the world.

Moreover, on the morning of the Feast, before the tables are set, all the Kings, and all the Dukes, Marquesses, Counts, Barons, Knights and Astrologers, and Philosophers, and Leeches, and Falconers, and other officials of sundry kinds from all the places roundabout, present themselves in the Great Hall before the Emperor; whilst those who can find no room to enter stand outside in such a position that the Emperor can see them all well. And the whole company is marshalled in this wise. First are the Kaan's sons, and his nephews, and the other Princes of the Blood Imperial; next to them all Kings; then Dukes, and then all others in succession according to the degree of each. And when they are all seated, each in his proper place, then a great prelate rises and says with a loud voice: "Bow and adore!" And as soon as he has said this, the company bow down until their foreheads touch the earth in adoration towards the Emperor as if he were a god. And this adoration they repeat four times, and then go to a highly decorated altar, on which is a vermilion tablet with the name of the Grand Kaan inscribed thereon, and a beautiful censer of gold. So they incense the tablet and the altar with great reverence, and then return each man to his seat.

When all have performed this, then the presents are offered, of which I have spoken as being so rich and costly. And after all have been offered and been seen by the Emperor, the tables are set, and all take their places at them with perfect order as I have already told you. And after dinner the jugglers come in and amuse the Court as you have heard before; and when that is over, every man goes to his quarters.

NOTE 1.—The first month of the year is still called by the Mongols *Chaghan* or *Chaghan Sara*, "the White" or "the White Month;" and the white clothing worn on this festive occasion must have been purely a Mongol custom. For when Shah Rukh's ambassadors were present at the New Year's Feast at the Court of the succeeding Chinese Dynasty (2nd February, 1421) they were warned that *no one* must wear white, as that among the Chinese was the colour of mourning. (*Koeppen*, I. 574, II. 309; *Cathay*, p. ccvii.)

NOTE 2.—On the mystic importance attached to the number 9 on all such occasions among the Mongols, see *Hammer's Golden Horde*, p. 208, *Hayton*, ch. iii. in Ramusio II. and *Strahlenberg* (II. 210 of Amsterd. ed. 1757). Vámbéry, speaking of the *Kādin* or marriage price among the Uzbeks, says: "The question is always how many times *nine* sheep, cows, camels, or horses, or how many times nine ducats (as is the custom in a town), the father is to receive for giving up his daughter." (*Sketches of Cent. Asia*, p. 103.)

NOTE 3.—The elephant stud of the Son of Heaven has dwindled till in 1862 Dr. Rennie found but one animal remaining. It is worth noticing that the housings of cut cloth or *appliqué* work ("*draps entaillés*") are still in fashion in India for the caparison of elephants.

NOTE 4.—In 1263 Kublai adopted the Chinese fashion of worshipping the tablets of his own ancestors, and probably at the same time the adoration of his own tablet by his subjects was introduced. Van Braam ingenuously relates how he and the rest of the Dutch Legation of 1794 performed the adoration of the Emperor's Tablet on first entering China, much in the way described in the text.

There is a remarkable amplification in the last paragraph of the chapter as given by Ramusio: "When all are in their proper places, a certain great personage, or high prelate as it were, gets up and says with a loud voice: 'Bow yourselves and adore!' On this immediately all bend and bow the forehead to the ground. Then the prelate says again: 'God save and keep our Lord the Emperor, with length of years and with mirth and happiness.' And all answer: 'So may it be!' And then again the prelate says: 'May God increase and augment his Empire and its prosperity more and more, and keep all his subjects in peace and goodwill, and may all things go well throughout his Dominion!' And all again respond: 'So may it be!' And this adoration is repeated four times."

One of Pauthier's most interesting notes is a long extract from the official Directory of Ceremonial under the Mongol Dynasty, which admirably illustrates the chapters we have last read. I borrow a passage regarding this adoration: "The Musician's Song having ceased, the Ministers shall recite with a loud voice the following Prayer: 'Great Heaven, that extendest over all! Earth which art under the guidance of Heaven! We invoke You and beseech You to heap blessings upon

the Emperor and the Empress ! Grant that they may live ten thousand, a hundred thousand years !'

"Then the First Chamberlain shall respond : 'May it be as the Prayer hath said !' The Ministers shall then prostrate themselves, and when they rise return to their places, and take a cup or two of wine."

The Kowtow (*Khêu-thêu*) which appears repeatedly in this ceremonial, and which in our text is indicated by the four prostrations, was, Pauthier alleges, not properly a Chinese form, but only introduced by the Mongols. Baber indeed speaks of it as the *Kornish*, a Moghul ceremony, in which originally "the person who performed it kneeled nine times and touched the earth with his brow each time." He describes it as performed very elaborately (nine times *twice*) by his younger uncle in visiting the elder. But in its essentials the ceremony must have been of old date at the Chinese Court. For the Annals of the Thang Dynasty, in a passage cited by M. Pauthier himself,\* mention that ambassadors from the famous Hárún al Rashíd in 798 had to perform "the ceremony of kneeling and striking the forehead against the ground." And M. Pauthier can scarcely be right in saying that the practice was disused by the Ming Dynasty and only reintroduced by the Manchus. For in the story of Shah Rukh's embassy the performance of the Kowtow occurs repeatedly.

(*Gaubil*, 142 ; *Van Braam*, I. 20-21 ; *Baber*, 106 ; *N. et E.* XIV. Pt. I. 405, 407, 418.)

The enumeration of *four* prostrations in the text is, I fancy, quite correct. There are several indications that this number was used instead of the three times three of later days. Thus Carpini, when introduced to the Great Kaan, "bent the left knee four times." And in the Chinese bridal ceremony of "Worshipping the Tablets," the genuflexion is made four times. At the court of Shah Abbas an obeissance evidently identical was repeated four times. (*Carp.* 759, *Doolittle*, p. 60 ; *P. della Valle*, I. 636.)

## CHAPTER XVI.

CONCERNING THE TWELVE THOUSAND BARONS WHO RECEIVE ROBES OF CLOTH OF GOLD FROM THE EMPEROR ON THE GREAT FESTIVALS, THIRTEEN CHANGES A-PIECE.

Now you must know that the Great Kaan hath set apart 12,000 of his men who are distinguished by the name of *Keshican*, as I have told you before ; and on each of these

12,000 Barons he bestows thirteen changes of raiment, which are all different from one another; I mean that in one set the 12,000 are all of one colour; the next 12,000 of another colour, and so on; so that they are of thirteen different colours. These robes are garnished with gems and pearls and other precious things in a very rich and costly manner.<sup>1</sup> And along with each of these changes of raiment, *i.e.* 13 times in the year, he bestows on each of those 12,000 Barons a fine golden girdle of great richness and value, and likewise a pair of boots of *Camut*, that is to say of *Borgal*, curiously wrought with silver thread; inso-much that when they are clothed in these dresses every man of them looks like a king!<sup>2</sup> And there is an established order as to which dress is to be worn at each of those thirteen feasts. The Emperor himself also has his thirteen suits corresponding to those of his Barons; in *colour*, I mean (though his are grander, richer, and costlier), so that he is always arrayed in the same colour as his Barons, who are, as it were, his comrades. And you may see that all this costs an amount which it is scarcely possible to calculate.

Now I have told you of the thirteen changes of raiment received from the Prince by those 12,000 Barons, amounting in all to 156,000 suits of so great cost and value, to say nothing of the girdles and the boots which are also worth a great sum of money. All this the Great Lord hath ordered, that he may attach the more of grandeur and dignity to his festivals.

And now I must mention another thing that I had forgotten, but which you will be astonished to learn from this Book. You must know that on the Feast Day a great Lion is led to the Emperor's presence, and as soon as it sees him it lies down before him with every sign of the greatest veneration, as if it acknowledged him for its lord; and it remains there lying before him, and entirely unchained. Truly this must seem a strange story to those who have not seen the thing!



NOTE 1.—On the *Keshican*, see note 1 to chap. xii., and on the changes of raiment note 3 to chap. xiv., and the remarks there as to the number of distributions. I confess that the stress laid upon the number 13 in this chapter makes the supposition of error more difficult. But there is something odd and unintelligible about the whole of the chapter except the last paragraph. For the 12,000 *Keshican* are here all elevated to *Barons*; and at the same time the statement about their changes of raiment seems to be merely that already made in chapter xiv. This repetition occurs only in the French MSS., but as it is in all these we cannot reject it.

NOTE 2.—The words *Camut* and *Borgal* appear both to be used here for what we call *Russia-Leather*. The latter word in one form or another, *Bolghár*, *Borgháli*, or *Bukál*, is the term applied to that material to this day nearly all over Asia. Ibn Batuta says that in travelling during winter from Constantinople to the Wolga he had to put on three pairs of boots, one of wool (which we should call stockings), a second of wadded linen, and a third of *Borgháli*, “i. e. of horse-leather lined with wolf-skin.” Horse-leather seems to be still the favourite material for boots among all the Tartar nations. The name was undoubtedly taken from *Bolghar* on the Wolga, the people of which are traditionally said to have invented the art of preparing skins in that manner. This manufacture is still one of the staple trades of Kazan, the city which in position and importance is the nearest representative of Bolghar now.

*Camut* is explained by Klaproth to be “leather made from the back skin of a camel.” It appears in Johnson’s Persian Dictionary as *Kámut*, but I do not know from what language it originally comes. The word is in the Latin column of the Petrarchian Vocabulary with the Persian rendering *Saghi*. This shows us what is meant, for *Saghi* is just our word *Sagreen*, and is applied to a fine leather granulated in that way which is much used for boots and the like by the people of Central Asia. In the commercial lists of our Indian N.W. frontier we find as synonymous *Saghi* or *Kimukht*, “Horse or Ass-hide.” No doubt this latter word is a form of *Kámut* or *Camut*. It appears (as *Keimukht*, “a sort of leather”) in a detail of imports to Aden given by *Ibn al Wardi*, a geographer of the 13th century.

Instead of *Camut*, Ramusio has *Camasca*, i. e. Chamois, and the same seems to be in all the editions based on Fra Pepino’s version. It may be a misrendering of *camutum* or *camutium*; or is there any real connexion between the Oriental *Kámut*, *Kimukht*, and the Italian *camasca*? (*J. B.* II. 445; *Klapr. Mem.* vol. III.; *Davies’s Trade Report*, App. p. ccxx; *Vandéry’s Travels*, 423; *Not. et Ext.* II. 43.)

Fraehn (writing in 1832) <sup>in his manuscript</sup> that he knew no use of the word *Bolghár*, in the sense of Russian leather, older than the 17th century. But we see that both Marco and Ibn Batuta use it. (*F. on the Wolga* *Bolghars*, p. 8-9.)

Pauthier in a note (p. 481) gives a list of the garments made of

certain officials on these ceremonial occasions under the Mongols, and sure enough this list includes "pairs of boots in red leather." Odoric particularly mentions the broad golden girdles worn at the Kaan's court.

NOTE 3.—Then come mummers leading lions, which they cause to salute the Lord with a reverence" (*Odoric*, p. 143). A lion sent by Mirza Baisangar, one of the Princes of Timur's House, accompanied Shah Rukh's embassy as a present to the Emperor; and like presents were frequently repeated (see *Amyot*, XIV. 37, 38).

---

## CHAPTER XVII.

HOW THE GREAT KAN ENJOINETH HIS PEOPLE TO SUPPLY HIM WITH GAME.

THE three months of December, January, and February, during which the Emperor resides at his Capital City, are assigned for hunting and fowling, to the extent of some 40 days' journey round the city; and it is ordained that the larger game taken be sent to the Court. To be more particular: of all the larger beasts of the chase, such as boars, roebucks, bucks, stags, lions, bears, &c., the greater part of what is taken has to be sent, and feathered game likewise. The animals are gutted and despatched to the Court on carts. This is done by all the people within 20 or 30 days' journey, and the quantity so despatched is immense. Those at a greater distance cannot send the game, but they have to send the skins after tanning them, and these are employed in the making of equipments for the Emperor's army.<sup>1</sup>

---

NOTE 1.—So Magaillans: "Game is so abundant, especially at the Capital, that every year during the three winter months you see at different places, intended for despatch thither, besides great piles of every sort of wildfowl, lines of four-footed game of a gunshot or two in length: the animals being all frozen and standing on their feet. Among other species you see three sundry kinds of bears. . . . and great abundance of other animals, as stags and deer of different sorts, boars, elks, hares, rabbits, squirrels, wild-cats, rats, geese, ducks, very

fine-jungle fowl, &c. &c., and all so cheap that I never could have believed it" (p. 177-8). As this writer mentions *wild-cats*, we may presume that the "Lions" of Polo also were destined to be eaten. \*

## CHAPTER XVIII.

OF THE LIONS AND LEOPARDS AND WOLVES THAT THE KAAN KEEPS  
FOR THE CHASE.

THE Emperor hath numbers of leopards trained to the chase,<sup>1</sup> and hath also a great many lynxes taught in like manner to catch game, and which afford excellent sport. He hath also several great Lions, bigger than those of Babylonia, beasts whose skins are coloured in the most beautiful way, being striped all along the sides with black, red, and white. These are trained to catch boars and wild cattle, bears, wild asses, stags, and other great or fierce beasts. \* And 'tis a rare sight, I can tell you, to see those lions giving chase to such beasts as I have mentioned! When they are to be so employed the Lions are taken out in a covered cart, and every Lion has a little doggie with him. [They are obliged to approach the game against the wind, otherwise the animals would scent the approach of the Lion and be off.]<sup>1</sup>

There are also a great number of eagles, all broken to catch wolves, foxes, deer, and wild-goats, and they do catch them in great numbers. But those especially that are trained to wolf-catching are very large and powerful birds, and no wolf is able to get away from them.<sup>4</sup>

NOTE 1. -The Cheeta or Hunting Leopard, still kept for the chase by native noblemen in India, is an animal very distinct from the true leopard. It is much more bulky and long-legged than the pure feline, is unable to climb trees, and its claws only partially retractile. Wood calls it a link between the feline and canine races. One thousand Cheetas were attached to Akbar's hunting establishment: and the

one, called Semend-Manik, was carried to the field in a palankin with a kettle-drum beaten before him. Boldensel in the first half of the 14th century speaks of the Cheeta as habitually used in Cyprus; but, indeed, a hundred years before, these animals had been constantly employed by the Emperor Frederic II. in Italy, and accompanied him on all his marches. They were carried on the horse's crupper like Kublai's (*supra* Book I. ch. lxi.); "they knew how to ride," Frederic used to say. This way of taking the cheeta to the field had been first employed by the Khalif Yazid, son of Mo'áwiyah. The Cheeta often appears in the pattern of silk damasks of the 13th and 14th centuries, both Asiatic and Italian. (*Ayeen Akbery*, I. 304, &c.; *Boldensel*, in *Canisii Thesaurus*, by *Basnage*, vol. IV. p. 339; *Kington's Fred. II.* I. 472, II. 156; *Bochart, Hierozoica*, 797; *Rock's Catalogue* passim.)

NOTE 2.—The word rendered Lynxes is *Leu cervers* (G. Text), *Loup serviers* of Pauthier's MS. C, though he has adopted from another *Loups* simply, which is certainly wrong. The *Geog. Latin* has "*Linceos, i.e. lupos cervorios.*" There is no doubt that the *Loup-cervier* is the Lynx. Thus Brunetto Latini, describing the Loup-cervier, speaks of its remarkable powers of vision, and refers to its agency in the production of the precious stone called *Liguire* (i.e. *Ligurium*, which the ancients fancied to come from *Lync-urium*; the tale is in Theophrastus). Yet the quaint Bestiary of Philip de Thaun, published by Mr. Wright, identifies it with the Greek Hyena:—

"*Hyena e Griu num, que nus beste apellum,  
Ceo est Lucervere, oler fait et mult est fere.*"

Lynxes were used at the Court of Akbar in hunting hares, foxes, and antelopes. They are also mentioned by A. Hamilton, as so used in Sind in the beginning of last century. This author calls the animal a *Shoe-goose!* i.e. *Siya-gosh* (Black-ear), the Persian name of the Lynx. It is still occasionally used in the chase by natives of rank in India. (*Brunetto Lat. Tresor*, p. 248; *Popular Treatises on Science written during Mid. Ages*, 94; *Ayeen Akbery*, u. s.; *Hamilt. E. Indies*, I. 125; *Vigne*, I. 42.)

NOTE 3.—The conception of a Tiger seems almost to have dropt out of the European mind during the middle ages. Thus in a mediæval Bestiary, a chapter on the Tiger begins: "*Une Beste est qui est apelée Tigre, c'est une manière de Serpent.*" Hence Polo can only call the Tigers, whose portrait he draws here not incorrectly, *Lions*. So also nearly 200 years later Barbaro gives a like portrait, and calls the animal *Leonza*. Marsden supposes judiciously that the confusion may have been promoted by the ambiguity of the Persian *Sher*.

The Chinese pilgrim, Sing-Yun (A.D. 318), saw two young lions at the Court of Gandhāra. He remarks that the pictures of these animals common in China, were not at all good likenesses. (*Beal*, p. 200.)

We do not hear in modern times of Tigers trained to the chase, but Chardin says of Persia : " In hunting the larger animals they make use of beasts of prey trained for the purpose, *lions*, leopards, *tigers*, panthers, ounces."

NOTE 4.—This is perfectly correct. In Eastern Turkestan, and among the Kirghiz to this day, eagles termed *Barkut* are tamed and trained to fly at wolves, foxes, deer, wild goats, &c. A Kirghiz will give a good horse for an eagle in which he recognises capacity for training. Pallas says the bird is the Golden Eagle, and Mr. Gould informs me that he has no doubt it is so. Mr. Atkinson gives vivid descriptions and illustrations of this eagle (which he calls " Bear coote "), attacking both deer and wolves. In both cases he represents the bird as striking one claw into the neck, and the other into the back of its large prey, and then tearing out the liver with its beak. Some things in these passages seem open to criticism, but Mr. Atkinson is no more. (*Tinkowski*, I. 414 ; *Lerchine*, p. 77 ; *Pallas*, *Voyages*, I. 421 ; *Izzet-Ullah* in *J. R. A. S.* VII. 305 ; *Atkinson's Or. and W. Siberia*, 493 ; and *Travels in Regions of the Amoor*, 146-7.)



The Barkut Eagle, after Atkinson.

## MARCO POLO.

### CHAPTER XIX.

#### CONCERNING THE TWO BROTHERS WHO HAVE CHARGE OF THE KAAH'S HOUNDS.

THE Emperor hath two Barons who are own brothers, one called Baian and the other Mingan; and these two are styled *Chinnuchi* (or *Cunichi*) which is as much as to say, "The Keepers of the Mastiff Dogs." Each of these brothers hath 10,000 men under his orders; each body of 10,000 being dressed alike, the one in red and the other in blue, and whenever they accompany the Lord to the chase, they wear this livery, in order to be recognized. Out of each body of 10,000 there are 2000 men who are each in charge of one or more great mastiffs, so that the whole number of these is very large. And when the Prince goes a-hunting, one of those Barons, with his 10,000 men and something like 5000 dogs, goes towards the right, whilst the other goes towards the left with his party in like manner. They move along, all abreast of one another, so that the whole line extends over a full day's journey, and no animal can escape them. Truly it is a glorious sight to see the working of the dogs and the huntsmen on such an occasion! And as the Lord rides a-fowling across the plains, you will see these big hounds coming tearing up, one pack after a bear, another pack after a stag, or some other beast, as it may hap, and running the game down now on this side and now on that, so that it is really a most delightful sport and spectacle.

[The Two Brothers I have mentioned are bound by the tenure of their office to supply the Kaan's Court from October to the end of March with 1000 head of game daily, whether of beasts or birds, and not counting quails; and also with fish to the best of their ability, allowing fish enough for three persons to reckon as equal to one head of game.]

Now I have told you of the Masters of the Hounds and all about them, and next will I tell you how the Lord goes off on an expedition for the space of three months.

NOTE 1.—Though this particular Bayan and Mingan are not likely to be mentioned in history, the names are both good Mongol names; *Bayan* that of a great soldier under Kublai, of whom we shall hear afterwards; and *Mingan* that of one of Chinghiz's generals.

The title of "Master of the Mastiffs" belonged to a high Court official at Constantinople in former days, *Samsunji Bashi*, and I have no doubt Marco has given the exact interpretation of the title of the two Barons; though it is difficult to trace its elements. It is read variously *Cünici* (i. e. *Kunichi*) and *Cinuci* (i. e. *Chinuchi*). It is evidently a word of analogous structure to *Kushchi*, the Master of the Falcons; *Parschi*, the Master of the Leopards. Professor Schiefner thinks it is probably corrupted from *Noghaichi*, which appears in Kovalévski's Mongol Dict. as "*chasseur qui a soins des chiens courants*." The word occurs, he points out, in Sanang Setzen, where Schmidt translates it *Aufscher über Hunde*. (See S. S. p. 39.)

The metathesis of *Noghai-chi* into *Kuni-chi* is the only drawback to this otherwise apt solution. We generally shall find Polo's Oriental words much more accurately expressed than this would imply. I have hazarded a suggestion of (Or. Turkish) *Chong-It-chi*, "Keeper of the Big Dogs," which Professor Vambery thinks possible (see "*chong*, big strong," in his *Tschagataische Sprachstudien*, p. 282, and note in *Lore Strangford's Selected Writings*, II. 160). This would exactly correspond to the rendering of Pipino's Latin translation, "*hec est canum magnorum Praefecti*." *Chinuchi* again would be (in Mongol) "Wolf-keepers." It is at least possible that the great dogs which Polo terms mastiffs may have been known by such a name. We apply the term Wolf-dog to several families, and in Macbeth's enumeration we have

"Hound, and greyhound, mongrels, spaniels, curs,  
hell-hounds, and blood-hounds."

## CHAPTER XX.

### HOW THE EMPEROR GOES ON A HUNTING EXPEDITION.

AFTER he has stopped at his capital city those three months that I mentioned, to wit, December, Jan—

February, he starts off on the 1st day of March, and travels southward towards the Ocean Sea, a journey of two days.<sup>1</sup> He takes with him full 10,000 falconers, and some 500 gerfalcons besides peregrines, sakers, and other hawks in great numbers; and goshawks also to fly at the water-fowl.<sup>2</sup> But do not suppose that he keeps all these together by him; they are distributed about, hither and thither, one hundred together, or two hundred at the utmost, as he thinks proper. But they are always fowling as they advance, and the most part of the quarry taken is carried to the Emperor. And let me tell you when he goes thus a-fowling with his gerfalcons and other hawks, he is attended by full 10,000 men who are disposed in couples; and these are called *Toscaol*, which is as much as to say, "Watchers." And the name describes their business.<sup>3</sup> They are posted from spot to spot, always in couples, and thus they cover a great deal of ground! Every man of them is provided with a whistle and hood, so as to be able to call in a hawk and hold it in hand. And when the Emperor makes a cast, there is no need that he follow it up, for those men I speak of keep so good a look out that they never lose sight of the birds, and if these hawks have need of help they are ready to render it.

All the Emperor's hawks, and those of the Barons as well, have a little label attached to the leg to mark them, on which is written the names of the owner and the keeper of the bird. And in this way the hawk, when caught, is at once identified and handed over to its owner. But if not, the bird is carried to a certain Baron who is styled the *Bularguchi*, which is as much as to say "The Keeper of Lost Property." And I tell you that whatever may be found without a known owner, whether it be a horse, or a sword, or a hawk, or what not, it is carried to that Baron straightway, and he takes charge of it. And if the finder neglects to carry his trove to the Baron, the latter punishes him. Likewise the loser of any article goes to the Baron,



and if the thing be in his hands it is immediately given up to the owner. Moreover, the said Baron always pitches on the highest spot of the camp, with his banner displayed in order that those who have lost or found anything may have no difficulty in finding their way to him. Thus nothing can be lost but it shall be straightway found and restored.<sup>4</sup>

And so the Emperor follows this road that I have mentioned, leading along in the vicinity of the Ocean Sea (which is within two days' journey of his capital city Cambaluc) and as he goes there is many a fine sight to be seen, and plenty of the very best entertainment in hawking; in fact, there is no sport in the world to equal it!

The Emperor himself is carried upon four elephants in a fine chamber made of timber, lined inside with plates of beaten gold, and outside with lion's skins [for he always travels in this way on his fowling expeditions, because he is troubled with gout]. He always keeps beside him a dozen of his choicest gervfalcons, and is attended by several of his Barons who ride on horseback alongside. And sometimes, as they may be going along, and the Emperor from his chamber is holding discourse with the Barons, one of the latter shall exclaim: "Sire! Look out for Cranes!" Then the Emperor instantly has the top of his chamber thrown open, and having marked the cranes he casts one of his gervfalcon—whichever he pleases; and often the quarry is struck within his view, so that he has the most exquisite sport and diversion, there as he sits in his chamber or lies on his bed; and all the Barons with him get the enjoyment of it likewise! So it is not without reason I tell you that I do not believe there ever existed in the world or ever will exist, a man with such sport and enjoyment as he has, or with such rare opportunities.<sup>5</sup>

And when he has travelled till he reaches a place called CACHAR MODUN,<sup>6</sup> there he finds his tents pitched, with the tents of his Sons, and his Barons, and those of his Ladies and

fine and rich ones. And I will tell you how his own quarters are disposed. The tent in which he holds his courts is large enough to give cover easily to a thousand souls. It is pitched with its door to the south, and the Barons and Knights remain in waiting in it, whilst the Lord abides in another close to it on the west side. When he wishes to speak with any one he causes the person to be summoned to that other tent. Immediately behind the great tent there is a fine large chamber where the Lord sleeps; and there are also many other tents and chambers, but they are not in contact with the Great Tent as these are. The two audience-tents and the sleeping-chamber are constructed in this way. Each of the audience-tents has three poles, which are of spice-wood, and are most artfully covered with lion's skins, striped with black and white and red, so that they do not suffer from any weather. All three apartments are also covered outside with similar skins of striped lions, a substance that lasts for ever.<sup>7</sup> And inside they are all lined with ermine and sable, these two being the finest and most costly furs in existence. For a robe of sable, large enough to line a mantle, is worth 2000 bezants of gold, or 1000 at least, and this kind of skin is called by the Tartars "The King of Furs." The beast itself is about the size of a marten.<sup>8</sup> These two furs of which I speak are applied and inlaid so exquisitely, that it is really something worth seeing. All the tent-ropes are of silk. And in short I may say that those tents, to wit the two audience-halls and the sleeping-chamber, are so costly that it is not every king could pay for them.

Round about these tents are others, also fine ones and beautifully pitched, in which are the Emperor's ladies, and the ladies of the other princes and officers. And then there are the tents for the hawks and their keepers, so that altogether the number of tents there on the plain is something wonderful. To see the many people that are thronging to

and from every side and every day there, you would find the camp for a good big city. For you must reckon the Leeches, and the Astrologers, and the Falconers, and all the other attendants on so great a company; and add that everybody there has his whole family with him, for such is their custom.

The Lord remains encamped there until the spring, and all that time he does nothing but go hawking round about among the canebrakes along the lakes and rivers that abound in that region, and across fine plains on which are plenty of cranes and swans, and all sorts of other fowl. The other gentry of the camp also are never done with hunting and hawking, and every day they bring home great stores of venison and feathered game of all sorts. Indeed, without having witnessed it, you would never believe what quantities of game are taken, and what marvellous sport and diversion they all have whilst they are in camp there.

There is another thing I should mention; to wit, that for 20 days' journey round the spot nobody is allowed, be he who he may, to keep hawks or hounds, though anywhere else whosoever list may keep them. And furthermore throughout all the Emperor's territories, nobody however audacious dares to hunt any of these four animals, to wit, hare, stag, buck, and roe, from the month of March to the month of October. Anybody who should do so would rue it bitterly. But those people are so obedient to their Lord's commands, that even if a man were to find one of those animals asleep by the roadside he would not touch it for the world! And thus the game multiplies at such a rate that the whole country swarms with it, and the Emperor gets as much as he could desire. Beyond the term I have mentioned, however, to wit that from March to October, everybody may take these animals as he list.

After the Emperor has tarried in that place, enjoying his sport as I have related, from March to the middle of May, he moves with all his people, and returns

his capital city of Cambaluc (which is also the capital of Cathay as you have been told), but all the while continuing to take his diversion in hunting and hawking as he goes along.

NOTE 1.—“*Vait vers midi jusques à la Mer Oceane, ou il y a deux journées.*” It is not possible in any way to reconcile this description as it stands with truth, though I do not see much room for doubt as to the direction of the excursion. Peking is 100 miles as the crow flies from the nearest point of the coast, at least 6 or 7 days' march for such a camp, and the direction is south-east, or nearly so. The last circumstance would not be very material as Polo's compass-bearings are not very accurate. We shall find that he makes the general line of bearing from Peking towards Kiangnan, *Scilicet* or S. East, hence his *Midi* ought in consistency to represent *S. West*, an impossible direction for the Ocean. It is remarkable that Ramusio has *Grero*, or N. East, which would by the same relative correction represent *East*. And other circumstances point to the frontier of Liautong as the direction of this excursion. Leaving the *two days* out of question therefore, I should suppose the “Ocean Sea” to be struck at Shan-hai-kwan near the terminus of the Great Wall, and that the site of the standing hunting-camp is in the country to the north of that point. The Jesuit Verbiest accompanied the Emperor Kanghi on a tour in this direction in 1682, and almost immediately after passing the Wall the Emperor and his party seem to have struck off to the left for sport.

Baldello Boni and H. Murray object to the view that the journey led in this direction, and suppose it to have been confined to the coast of Pecheli. Nothing that I can learn of that vicinity shows any probability of its being selected for sport. They urge the improbability of “an excursion into the frozen mountains of Tartary” in the beginning of March. We find, however, that the Emperor Kanghi started from Peking on the 23rd of March, on the hunting-journey just referred to.

NOTE 2.—We are told that Bajazet had 7000 falconers and 6000 dog keepers; whilst Sultan Mahomed Tughlak of India in the generation following Polo's, is said to have had 10,000 falconers, and 3000 other attendants as beaters. (*Not. et Ext.* XIII. p. 185.)

The Oriental practice seems to have assigned one man to the attendance on every hawk. This Kaempfer says was the case at the Court of Persia at the beginning of last century. There were about 800 hawks, and each had a special keeper. The same was the case with the Emperor Kanghi's hawking-establishment according to Gerbillon. (*Am. Exot.* p. 83; *Gerb.* 1st Journey, in *Duhalde.*)

NOTE 3.—The French MSS. read, *Toscaor*: the reading in the text

I take from Ramusio. It is Turki, *Toskätül*, توسقاؤل, defined as "Gardien-surveillant de la route; Wächter, Wache, Wegehüter" (see *Zenker*, and *Pavet de Courteille*). The word is perhaps also Mongol, for Rémusat has *Tosiyal* = "Veille" (*Mél. As.* I. 231). Such an example of Polo's correctness both in the form and meaning of a Turki word is worthy of especial note, and shows how little he merits the wild and random treatment which has been often applied to the solution of like phrases in his book.

NOTE 4.—The remark in the previous note might be repeated here. The *Bularguji* was an officer of the Mongol camp, whose duties are thus described by Mahomed Hindú Shah in a work on the offices of the Perso-Mongol Court. "He is an officer appointed by the Council of State, who, at the time when the camp is struck, goes over the ground with his servants, and collects slaves of either sex, or cattle, such as horses, camels, oxen, and asses, that have been left behind, and retains them until the owners appear and prove their claim to the property, when he makes it over to them. The *Bularguji* sticks up a flag by his tent or hut to enable people to find him, and so recover their lost property" (*Golden Horde*, p. 245). And in the Appendix to that work (p. 476) there is a copy of a warrant to such a *Bularguji* or Provost Marshal. The derivation appears therein as from *Bularghu*, "Lost property." Here again it was impossible to give both form and meaning of the word more exactly than Polo has done. Though Hammer writes these terminations in *ji* (*tschi*), I believe *chi* (*tschi*) is preferable.

NOTE 5. A like description is given by Odoric of the mode in which the successor of Kublai travelled between Cambaluc and Shangtu, with his talisman also in the chamber beside him. What Kublai had adopted as an indulgence to his years and gout, his successors probably followed as a precedent without these excuses.

NOTE 6. Merssen is not hard to identify this place, Kachar Modun, with *Tschak*, 250 miles from *Menden*, which appears in D'Anville's atlas as the title of a "Forêt de pins naturelle," in the extreme east of Manchuria, and in latitude between the Kiangsi Lake and the sea: Pauthier adopts the Chinese name.

This position is out of the question. It is more than 900 miles, in a straight line, from Peking, and the journey thither and back would have taken Kublai's camp something like six months, without any allowance for the long halt implied in the text. The name *Kachar Modun* is probably Mongol, and as *Kachar* appears to be "land, region," and *Modun* = "wood" or "tree," a fair interpretation lies on the surface. Such a name indeed has little individuality. But we may notice that the Jesuit maps have a *Modun Kintan* ("Wood-village") just about the locality where we have supposed this hunting excursion, viz., in the region north of the eastern extremity of the Great Wall.

NOTE 7. I suppose the best accessible illustration of the Kaan's

great tent may be that in which the Emperor Kienlung received Lord Macartney in the same region in 1793, of which one view is given in Staunton's plates. Another exists in the Staunton Collection in the B. M., of which I give a reduced sketch.

Kublai's great tent after all was but a fraction of the size of Akbar's audience-tents, the largest of which we are told could hold 10,000 people, and took 1000 *farrâshes* a week's work to pitch it, with the help of machines. But perhaps the manner of *holding* people is differently estimated. (*Ain Akh.* 53.)



The Tents of the Emperor Kienlung.

In the description of the tent-poles, Pauthier's text has "*trois coulombes de fust de pieces moult bien encuierées,*" &c. The G. T. has "*de leing d'especies mout bien curés,*" &c. The Crusca, "*di spezie molto belle,*" and Ramusio going off at a tangent, "*di legno intagliate con grandissimo artificio e indorate.*" Without feeling certain, I believe the translation in the text to indicate the true reading. It might mean camphor-wood, or the like.

NOTE 8.—The expressions about the sable run in the G. T., "*et l'appellent les Tartarz les roi des pelaines,*" &c. This has been curiously misunderstood both in versions based on Pipino, and in the Geog. Latin and Crusca Italian. The Geog. Latin gives us "*vocant eas Tartari Lenoidae Pellonae;*" the Crusca, "*chiamante li Tartari Leroide Pelame;*" Ramusio in a very odd way combines both the genuine and the blundered interpretation: "*E li Tartari la chiamano Regina delle Pelli; e gli animali si chiamano Rondes.*" Fraehn ingeniously suggested that this *Rondes* (which proves to be merely a misunderstanding of the French words *Roi des*) was a mistake for *Kunduz*, usually meaning a "beaver," but also a "sable" (see *Ibn Fozlan*, p. 57). *Condux*, no doubt with this meaning, appears coupled with *vair*, in a Venetian Treaty with Egypt (1344), quoted by Heyd (II, 208.)

*Ibn Batuta* puts the ermine above the sable. An ermine pelisse, he

says, was worth in India 1000 dinárs of that country, whilst a sable one was worth only 400 dinárs. As Ibn Batuta's Indian dinárs are *Rupees*, the estimate of price is greatly lower than Polo's. Some years ago I find the price of a *Sack*, as it is technically called by the Russian traders, of robe of fine sables, stated to be in the Siberian market about 7000 banco rubels, *i.e.* I believe about 350*l.* The same authority mentions that in 1591 the Czar Theodore Ivanovich made a present of a pelisse valued at the equivalent of 5000 *silver* rubels of modern Russian money, or upwards of 750*l.* Atkinson speaks of a *single* sable skin of the highest quality, for which the trapper demanded 18*l.* The great mart for fine sables is at Olekma on the Lena. (See *J. B.* II. 401-2; *Baer's Beiträge*, VII. 215 *seqq.*; *Upper and Lower Amoor*, 390.)

NOTE 9.—Hawking is still commonly practised in North China. Pétis de la Croix the elder, in his account of the *Yasa*, or Institutes of Chinghiz, quotes, seemingly as from Mirkhond, one which lays down that between March and October "no one should take stags, deer, roebucks, hares, wild asses, nor some certain birds," in order that there might be ample sport in winter for the court and soldiers. This would be just the reverse of Polo's statement, but I suspect it is merely a careless adoption of the latter. There are many such traps in Pétis de la Croix. (Engl. Vers. 1722. p. 82.)

## CHAPTER XXI

HOW THE GREAT KAA, ON RETURNING FROM HIS HUNTING EXPEDITION, HOLDS A GREAT COURT AND ENTERTAINMENT. REHEARSAL OF THE WAY HIS YEAR IS DISTRIBUTED.

ON arriving at his capital of Cambaluc,<sup>1</sup> he stays in his palace there three days and no more: during which time he has great court entertainments and rejoicings, and makes merry with his wives. He then quits his palace at Cambaluc, and proceeds to that city which he has built, as I told you before, and which is called Chandu, where he has that grand park and palace of cane, and where he keeps his gerfalcons in mew. There he spends the summer, to escape the heat, for the situation is a very cool one. After stopping there from the beginning of May to the 28th of August, he takes his departure (that is the time when they sprinkle the white mares' milk as I told you), and returns

to his capital Cambaluc. There he stops, as I have told you also, the month of September, to keep his Birthday Feast, and also throughout October, November, December, January, and February, in which last month he keeps the grand feast of the New Year, which they call the White Feast, as you have heard already with all particulars. He then sets out on his march towards the Ocean Sea, hunting and hawking, and continues out from the beginning of March to the middle of May; and then comes back for three days only to the capital, during which he makes merry with his wives, and holds a great court and grand entertainments. In truth, 'tis something astonishing, the magnificence displayed by the Emperor in those three days; and then he starts off again as you know.

Thus his whole year is distributed in the following manner: six months at his chief palace in the royal city of Cambaluc, to wit, *September, October, November, December, January, February*;

Then on the great hunting-expedition towards the sea, *March, April, May*;

Then back to his palace at Cambaluc for *three days*;

Then off to the city of Chandu which he has built, and where the Cane Palace is, where he stays *June, July, August*;

Then back again to his capital city of Cambaluc.

So thus the whole year is spent; six months at the capital, three months in hunting, and three months at the Cane Palace to avoid the heat. And in this way he passes his time with the greatest enjoyment; not to mention occasional journeys in this or that direction at his own pleasure.

NOTE 1.—This recapitulatory chapter, with its wearisome and whimsical reiteration, reminding one of a game of forfeits, is peculiar to that class of MSS. which claims to represent the copy given to Thibault de Cepoy by Marco Polo. It was first published in Lázari's Italian edition, translated from the Bern MS.



## CHAPTER XXII.

## CONCERNING THE CITY OF CAMBALUC, AND ITS GREAT TRAFFIC AND POPULATION.

You must know that the city of Cambaluc hath such a multitude of houses, and such a vast population inside the walls and outside, that it seems quite past all possibility. There is a suburb outside each of the gates, which are twelve in number; and these suburbs are so great that they contain more people than the city itself [for the suburb of one gate spreads in width till it meets the suburb of the next, whilst they extend in length some three or four miles]. In those suburbs lodge the foreign merchants and travellers, of whom there are always great numbers who have come to bring presents to the Emperor, or to sell articles at Court, or because the city affords so good a mart to attract traders. [There are in each of the suburbs, to a distance of a mile from the city, numerous fine hostelries for the lodgment of merchants from different parts of the world, and a special hostelry is assigned to each description of people, as if we should say there is one for the Lombards, another for the Germans, and a third for the Frenchmen.] And thus there are as many good houses outside of the city as inside, without counting those that belong to the great lords and barons, who are very numerous.

You must know that it is forbidden to bury any dead body inside the city. If the body be that of an Idolater it is carried out beyond the city and suburbs to a remote place assigned for the purpose, to be burnt. And if it be of one belonging to a religion the custom of which is to bury, such as the Christian, the Saracen, or what not, it is also carried out beyond the suburbs to a distant place assigned for the purpose. And thus the city is preserved in a better and more healthy state.

Moreover, no public woman resides inside the city, but

all such abide outside in the suburbs. And 'tis wonderful what a vast number of these there are for the foreigners; it is a certain fact that there are more than 20,000 of them living by prostitution. And that so many can live in this way will show you how vast is the population.

[Guards patrol the city every night in parties of 30 or 40, looking out for any persons who may be abroad at unseasonable hours, *i.e.* after the great bell hath stricken thrice. If they find any such person he is immediately taken to prison, and examined next morning by the proper officers. If these find him guilty of any misdemeanour they order him a proportionate beating with the stick. Under this punishment people sometimes die; but they adopt it in order to eschew bloodshed; for their *Bacsis* say that it is an evil thing to shed man's blood.]

To this city also are brought articles of greater cost and rarity, and in greater abundance of all kinds, than to any other city in the world. For people of every description, and from every region, bring things (including all the costly wares of India, as well as the fine and precious goods of Cathay itself with its provinces), some for the sovereign, some for the court, some for the city which is so great, some for the crowds of Barons and Knights, some for the great hosts of the Emperor which are quartered round about; and thus between court and city the quantity brought in is endless.

As a sample, I tell you, no day in the year passes that there do not enter the city 1000 cart-loads of silk alone, from which are made quantities of cloth of silk and gold, and of other goods. And this is not to be wondered at; for in all the countries round about there is no flax, so that everything has to be made of silk. It is true, indeed, that in some parts of the country there is cotton and hemp, but not sufficient for their wants. This, however, is not of much consequence, because silk is so abundant and cheap, and is a more valuable substance than either flax



Round about this great city of Cambaluc there are some 200 other cities at various distances, from which traders come to sell their goods and buy others for their lords; and all find means to make their sales and purchases, so that the traffic of the city is passing great.

NOTE 1.—It would seem to have been usual to reckon *twelve* suburbs to Peking down to modern times; see *Deguignes*, III. 38.

NOTE 2.—The word here used is *Fondaco*, often employed in mediæval Italian in the sense nearly of what we call a *factory*. The word is from the Greek *παραδοκίον*, but through the Arabic *Fandûk*. The latter word is used by Ibn Batuta in speaking of the hostelries at which the Mussulman merchants put up in China.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

[CONCERNING THE OPPRESSIONS OF ACHMATH THE BAILO, AND THE PLOT THAT WAS FORMED AGAINST HIM.]

You will hear further on how that there are twelve persons appointed, who have authority to dispose of lands, offices, and everything else at their discretion. Now one of these was a certain Saracen named ACHMATH, a shrewd and able man, who had more power and influence with the Grand Kaan than any of the others; and the Kaan held him in such regard that he could do what he pleased. The fact was, as came out after his death, that Achmath had so wrought upon the Kaan with his sorcery, that the latter had the greatest faith and reliance on everything he said, and in this way did everything that Achmath wished him to do.

This person disposed of all governments and offices, and passed sentence on all malefactors; and whenever he desired to have any one whom he hated put to death, whether with justice or without it, he would go to the

Emperor and say: "Such an one deserves death, for he hath done this or that against your imperial dignity. Then the Lord would say: "Do as you think right," and so he would have the man forthwith executed. Thus when people saw how unbounded were his powers, and how unbounded the reliance placed by the Emperor on every thing that he said, they did not venture to oppose him in anything. No one was so high in rank or power as to be free from the dread of him. If any one was accused by him to the Emperor of a capital offence, and desired to defend himself, he was unable to bring proofs in his own exculpation, for no one would stand by him, as no one dared to oppose Achmath. And thus the latter caused many to perish unjustly."

Moreover, there was no beautiful woman whom he might desire, but he got hold of her; if she were unmarried, forcing her to be his wife, if otherwise, compelling her to consent to his desires. Whenever he knew of any one who had a pretty daughter, certain ruffians of his would go to the father, and say: "What say you? Here is this pretty daughter of yours; give her in marriage to the Bailo Achmath (for they called him 'the Bailo,' or, as we should say, 'the Vicegerent'), and we will arrange for his giving you such a government or such an office for three years." And so the man would surrender his daughter. And Achmath would go to the Emperor, and say: "Such a government is vacant, or will be vacant on such a day. So-and-So is a proper man for the post." And the Emperor would reply: "Do as you think best;" and the father of the girl was immediately appointed to the government. Thus either through the ambition of the parents, or through fear of the Minister, all the beautiful women were at his beck, either as wives or —————. Also he had some five-and-twenty sons who held offices of importance, and some of these, under the protection of their father's name, committed scandals like his own, and many other abominable im-

This Achmath also had amassed great treasure, for everybody who wanted office sent him a heavy bribe.

In such authority did this man continue for two and twenty years. At last the people of the country, to wit the Cathayans, utterly wearied with the endless outrages and abominable iniquities which he perpetrated against them, whether as regarded their wives or their own persons, conspired to slay him and revolt against the government. Amongst the rest there was a certain Cathayan named Chenchu, a commander of a thousand, whose mother, daughter, and wife had all been dishonoured by Achmath. Now this man, full of bitter resentment, entered into parley regarding the destruction of the Minister with another Cathayan whose name was Vanchu, who was a commander of 10,000. They came to the conclusion that the time to do the business would be during the Great Kaan's absence from Cambaluc. For after stopping there three months he used to go to Chandu and stop there three months; and at the same time his son Chinkin used to go away to his usual haunts, and this Achmath remained in charge of the city; sending to obtain the Kaan's orders from Chandu when any emergency arose.

So Vanchu and Chenchu, having come to this conclusion, proceeded to communicate it to the chief people among the Cathayans, and then by common consent sent word to their friends in many other cities that they had determined on such a day, at the signal given by a beacon, to massacre all the men with beards, and that the other cities should stand ready to do the like on seeing the signal fires. The reason why they spoke of massacring the bearded men was that the Cathayans naturally have no beard, whilst beards are worn by the Tartars, Saracens, and Christians. And you should know that all the Cathayans detested the Grand Kaan's rule because he set over them governors who were Tartars, or still more frequently Saracens, and these they could not endure, for they were

treated by them just like slaves. You see the Great Kaan had not succeeded to the dominion of Cathay by hereditary right, but held it by conquest; and thus having no confidence in the natives, he put all authority into the hands of Tartars, Saracens, or Christians, who were attached to his household and devoted to his service, and were foreigners in Cathay.

Wherefore, on the day appointed, the aforesaid Vanchu and Chenchu having entered the palace at night, Vanchu sat down and caused a number of lights to be kindled before him. He then sent a messenger to Achmath the Bailo, who lived in the old City, as if to summon him to the presence of Chinkin, the Great Kaan's son, who (it was pretended) had arrived unexpectedly. When Achmath heard this he was much surprised, but made haste to go, for he feared the Prince greatly. When he arrived at the gate he met a Tartar called Cogatai, who was Captain of the 12,000 that formed the standing garrison of the City; and the latter asked him whither he was bound so late? "To Chinkin, who is just arrived." Quoth Cogatai, "How can that be? How could he come so privily that I know nought of it?" So he followed the Minister with a certain number of his men. Now the notion of the Cathayans was that, if they could reach an end of Achmath, they would have nothing else to be afraid of. So as soon as Achmath got into the palace, and saw all that illumination, he bowed down to let Vanchu, supposing him to be Chinkin, and Chenchu who was standing ready with a sword straightway cut his head off. As soon as Cogatai, who had halted at the entrance, beheld this, he shouted "Treason!" and instantly discharged an arrow at Vanchu and shot him dead as he sat. At the same time he called his people to seize Chenchu, and sent a proclamation through the city that any one found in the streets would be instantly put to death. The Cathayans saw that the Tartars had discovered the plot, and that they had no

longer any leader, since Vanchu was killed and Chenchu was taken. So they kept still in their houses, and were unable to pass the signal for the rising of the other cities as had been settled. Cogatai immediately dispatched messengers to the Great Kaan giving an orderly report of the whole affair, and the Kaan sent back orders for him to make a careful investigation, and to punish the guilty as their misdeeds deserved. In the morning Cogatai examined all the Cathayans, and put to death a number whom he found to be ringleaders in the plot. The same thing was done in the other cities, when it was found that the plot extended to them also.

After the Great Kaan had returned to Cambaluc he was very anxious to discover what had led to this affair, and he then learned all about the endless iniquities of that accursed Achmath and his sons. It was proved that he and seven of his sons (for they were not all bad) had forced no end of women to be their wives, besides those whom they had ravished. The Great Kaan then ordered all the treasure that Achmath had accumulated in the Old City to be transferred to his own treasury in the New City, and it was found to be of enormous amount. He also ordered the body of Achmath to be dug up and cast into the street for the dogs to tear; and commanded those of his sons that had followed the father's evil example to be flayed alive.<sup>4</sup>

These circumstances called the Kaan's attention to the accursed doctrines of the Sect of the Saracens, which excuse every crime, and even murder itself when committed on such as are not of their religion. And seeing that this doctrine had led the accursed Achmath and his sons to act as they did without any sense of guilt, the Kaan was led to entertain the greatest disgust and abomination for it. So he summoned the Saracens and prohibited their doing many things which their religion enjoined. Thus, he ordered them to regulate their marriages by the Tartar Law,



and prohibited their cutting the throats of animals killed for food, ordering them to rip the stomach in the Tartar way.

Now when all this happened Messer Marco was upon the spot.<sup>1</sup>

- NOTE 1.—This narrative is from Ramusio's version, and constitutes one of the most notable passages peculiar to that version.

The name of the oppressive Minister is printed in Ramusio's Collection *Achmach*. But the *c* and *t* are so constantly interchanged in MSS. that I think there can be no question this was a mere clerical error for *Achmath*, and so I write it. I have also for consistency changed the spelling of *Xandu*, *Chingis*, &c. to that hitherto adopted in our text of *Chandu*, *Chinkin*, &c.

NOTE 2.—The remarks of a Chinese historian on Kublai's administration may be appropriately quoted here: "Hupilai Han must certainly be regarded as one of the greatest princes that ever existed, and as one of the most successful in all that he undertook. This he owed to his judgment in the selection of his officers, and to his talent for commanding them. He carried his arms into the most remote countries, and rendered his name so formidable that not a few nations spontaneously submitted to his supremacy. Nor was there ever an Empire of such vast extent. He cultivated literature, protected its professors, and even thankfully received their advice. Yet he never placed a Chinese in his cabinet, and he employed foreigners only as Ministers. These, however, he chose with discernment, *always excepting the Ministers of Finance*. He really loved his subjects: and if they were not always happy under his government, it is because they took care to conceal their sufferings. There were in those days no Public Censors whose duty it is to warn the Sovereign of what is going on: and no one dared to speak out for fear of the resentment of the Ministers who were the depositaries of the Imperial authority, and the authors of the oppressions under which the people laboured. Several Chinese, men of letters and of great ability, who lived at Hupilai's court, might have rendered that prince the greatest service in the administration of his dominions, but they never were intrusted with any but subordinate offices, and they were not in a position to make known the malversations of those public bloodsuckers." (*Demaille*, IX. 459-460.)

AHMAU was a native of Fenshet (afterwards Shat Jaxartes, and obtained employment under Kublai through the Empress Jamui Khatun, who had known him before her marriage. To her Court he was originally attached, but we find him already employed in high financial office in 1264. Kublai's demands for money must have been very large, and he eschewed looking too closely into the character of his

financial agents or the means by which they raised money for him. Ahmad was very successful in this, and being a man of great talent and address, obtained immense influence over the Emperor, until at last nothing was done save by his direction, though he always *appeared* to be acting under the orders of Kublai. The Chinese authorities\* in Gaubil and Demailla speak strongly of his oppressions, but only in general terms, and without affording such particulars as we derive from the text.

The Hereditary Prince Chingkim was strongly adverse to Ahmad; and some of the high Chinese officials on various occasions made remonstrance against the Minister's proceedings; but Kublai turned a deaf ear to them, and Ahmad succeeded in ruining most of his opponents. (*Gaubil*, 141, 143, 151; *Demailla*, IX. 316-17; *D'Ohsson*, II. 468-9.)

NOTE 3.—This term *Bailo* was the designation of the representative of Venetian dignity at Constantinople, called *Podestà* during the period of the Latin rule there, and it has endured throughout the Turkish Empire to our own day in the form *Balios* as the designation of a Frank Consul. But that term itself could scarcely have been in use at Cambaluc, even among the handful of Franks, to designate the powerful Minister, and it looks as if Marco had confounded the word in his own mind with some Oriental term of like sound, possibly the Arabic *Hâli*, "a Prince, Governor of a Province. . . . a chief Magistrate" (*P. Johnson*). In the *Roteiro* of the Voyage of Vasco da Gama (2nd ed. Lisbon, 1861, p. 53-4) it is said that on the arrival of the ships at Calicut the King sent "a man who was called the *Bale* which is much the same as *Alquaide*." And the Editor gives the same explanation that I have suggested.

NOTE 4.—The story, as related in Demailla and Gaubil, is as follows. It contains much less detail than the text, and it differs as to the manner of the chief conspirator's death, whilst agreeing as to his name and the main facts of the episode.

In the spring of 1282 (*Gaubil*, 1281) Kublai and Prince Chingkim had gone off as usual to Shangtu, leaving Ahmad in charge at the Capital. The whole country was at heart in revolt against his oppressions. Kublai alone knew, or would know, nothing of them.

WANGCHU, a chief officer of the City, resolved to take the opportunity of delivering the Empire from such a curse, and was joined in his enterprise by a certain sorcerer called Kao-Hoshang. They sent two Lamas to the Council Board with a message that the Crown Prince was returning to the Capital to take part in certain Buddhist ceremonies, but no credit was given to this. Wangchu then, pretending to have received orders from the Prince, desired an officer called CHANG-Y (perhaps the Chenchu of Polo's narrative) to go in the evening with a guard of honour to receive him. Late at night a message was sent to summon the Ministers, as the Prince (it was pretended) had already arrived. They came in haste with Ahmad at their head, and as he entered the Palace Wangchu struck him heavily with a copper mace

and stretched him dead. Wangchu was arrested, or according to one account surrendered, though he might easily have escaped, confident that the Crown Prince would save his life. Intelligence was sent off to Kublai, who received it at Chaghan-Nur (see Book I. ch. ix.). He immediately dispatched officers to arrest the guilty and bring them to justice. Wangchu, Chang-y, and Kao-Hoshang were publicly executed at the Old City; Wangchu dying like a hero, and maintaining that he had done the Empire an important service which would yet be acknowledged. (*Demailla*, IX. 412-13; *Gaubil*, 193-4; *D'Ohsson*, II. 470.)

NOTE 5.—And it is a pleasant fact that Messer Marco's presence, and his upright conduct upon this occasion, have not been forgotten in the Chinese Annals: "The Emperor having returned from Chaghan-Nur to Shangtu, desired POLO, Assessor of the Privy Council, to explain the reasons which had led Wangchu to commit this murder. Polo spoke with boldness of the crimes and oppressions of Ahama (Ahmad), which had rendered him an object of detestation throughout the Empire. The Emperor's eyes were opened, and he praised the courage of Wangchu. He complained that those who surrounded him, in abstaining from admonishing him of what was going on, had thought more of their fear of displeasing the Minister than of the interests of the State." By Kublai's order, the body of Ahmad was taken up, his head was cut off and publicly exposed, and his body cast to the dogs. His son also was put to death with all his family, and his immense wealth confiscated. 714 persons were punished, one way or other, for their share in Ahmad's malversations. (*Demailla*, IX. 413-14.)

What is said near the end of this chapter about the Kaan's resentment against the Saracens, has some confirmation in circumstances related by Rashiduddin. The refusal of some Musulman merchants, on a certain occasion at Court, to eat of the dishes sent them by the Emperor, gave great offence, and led to the revival of an order of Chinghiz, which prohibited, under pain of death, the slaughter of animals by cutting their throats. This endured for seven years, and was then removed on the strong representation made to Kublai of the loss caused by the cessation of the visits of the Mahomedan merchants. On a previous occasion also the Mahomedans had incurred disfavour, owing to the ill-will of certain Christians, who quoted to Kublai a text of the Koran enjoining the killing of polytheists. The Emperor sent for the Mullahs, and asked them why they did not act on the Divine injunction? All they could say was that the time was not yet come! Kublai ordered them for execution, and was only appeased by the intercession of Ahmad, and the introduction of a divine with more tact, who smoothed over obnoxious applications of the text. (*D'Ohsson*, II. 492-3.)

## CHAPTER XXIV.

HOW THE GREAT KHAŶ CAUSETH THE BARK OF TREES MADE INTO SOMETHING LIKE PAPER, TO PASS FOR MONEY OVER ALL HIS COUNTRY.

Now that I have told you in detail of the splendour of the Emperor's, I will proceed to tell you of that which he hath in the same city, in the which he his money coined and struck, as I shall relate to you.

in doing so I shall make manifest to it is that the Great Lord may well be able to a even much more than I have told you, or am going to in this Book. For, tell it how I might, you never would be satisfied that I was keeping within truth and reason!

The Emperor's Mint then is in this same City of Cambaluc, and the way it is wrought is such that you might say he hath the Secret of Alchemy in perfection, and you would be right! For he makes his money after this fashion.

He makes them take of the bark of a certain tree, in fact of the Mulberry Tree, the leaves of which are the food of the silkworms,—these trees being so numerous that whole districts are full of them. What they take is a certain fine white bast or skin which lies between the wood of the tree and the thick outer bark, and thus they make into something resembling sheets of paper, but black. When these sheets have been prepared they are cut up into pieces of different sizes. The smallest of these sizes is worth a half tornesel; the next, a little larger, one tornesel; one, a little larger still, is worth half a silver groat of Venice; another a whole groat; others yet two groats, five groats, and ten groats. There is also a kind worth the Byzant of and others of that name, and so on to ten. All these pieces of paper are issued with as much solemnity and authority as if they were of pure gold or silver, and on every piece a variety of figures, which





bury it, have to wear their noses, and to put their seals. And when all is prepared duly, the chief officer deputed by the Kaan causes the Seal impressed to him with vermillion, and impresses it on the paper, so that the form of the Seal remains stamped upon it in red; the Money is then authentic. Any one forging it would be punished with death. And the Kaan causes every year to be made such a vast quantity of this money, which costs him nothing, that it must equal in amount all the treasure in the world.

With these pieces of paper, made as I have described, he causes all payments on his own account to be made; and he makes them to pass current universally over all his kingdoms and provinces and territories, and whithersoever his power and sovereignty extends. And nobody, how important he may think himself, dares to refuse them on pain of death. And indeed everybody takes them readily, for wheresoever a person may go throughout the Great Kaan's dominions he shall find these pieces of paper current, and shall be able to transact all sales and purchases of goods by means of them just as well as

are so

ten

worth does not weigh the golden ounce.

Furthermore all merchants arriving from India or other countries, and bringing with them gold or silver or gems and pearls, are prohibited from selling to any one but the Emperor. He has twelve experts chosen for this business, men of shrewdness and experience in such affairs; these appraise the articles, and the Emperor then pays a liberal price for them in these pieces of paper. The merchants accept his price, and so the first part of the business is done, and the merchants are enabled to return home with their goods, and the Emperor is enabled to pay for the goods he has bought.

400,000 bezants, and the Grand Sire pays for all in that paper. So he buys such a quantity of those precious things every year that his treasure is endless, whilst all the time the money he pays away costs him nothing at all. Moreover several times in the year proclamation is made through the city that any one who may have gold or silver or gems or pearls, by taking them to the Mint shall get a handsome price for them. And the owners are glad to do this, because they would find no other purchaser give so large a price. Thus the quantity they bring in is marvellous, though those who do not choose to do so may let it alone. Still, in this way, nearly all the valuables in the country come into the Kaan's possession.

When any of those pieces of paper are spoilt—not that they are so very flimsy neither—the owner carries them to the Mint, and by paying 3 per cent. on the value he gets new pieces in exchange. And if any Baron, or any one else soever, hath need of gold or silver or gems or pearls, in order to make plate, or girdles or the like, he goes to the Mint and buys as much as he list, paying in this paper-money.<sup>1</sup>

Now you have heard the ways and means whereby the Great Kaan may have, and in fact *has*, more treasure than all the Kings in the World; and you know all about it and the reason why. And now I will tell you of the great Dignitaries which act in this city on behalf of the Emperor.

NOTE 1.—It is surprising to find that, nearly two centuries ago, Magaillans, a missionary who had lived many years in China, and was presumably a Chinese scholar, should have utterly denied the truth of Polo's statements about the paper-currency of China. Yet the fact even then did not rest on Polo's statement only. The same thing had been alleged in the printed works of Rubruquis, Roger Bacon, Hayton, Friar Odoric, the Archbishop of Soltania, and Josaphat Barbaro, to say nothing of other European authorities that remained in manuscript, or of the numerous Oriental records of the same circumstance.

The issue of paper-money in China is at least as old as the beginning



of the 9th century. In 1160 the system had gone to such excess that government paper equivalent in nominal value to 43,600,000 ounces of silver had been issued in six years, and there were local notes besides; so that the Empire was flooded with rapidly depreciating paper.

The *Min* or "Golden" Dynasty of Northern Invaders who immediately preceded the Mongols took to paper, in spite of their title, as kindly as the native sovereigns. Their notes had a course of seven years, after which new notes were issued to the holders, with a deduction of 15 per cent.

The Mongols commenced their issues of paper-money in 1236, long before they had transferred the seat of their government to China. Kublai made such an issue in the first year of his reign (1260), and continued to issue notes copiously till the end. In 1287 he put out a complete new currency, one note of which was to exchange against five of the previous series of equal nominal value! In both issues the paper-money was, in official valuation, only equivalent to half its nominal value in silver. The paper-money was called *Chao*.

The notes of Kublai's first issue (1260-1287) with which Polo may be supposed most familiar, were divided into 3 classes; (1) *Notes of Tens*, viz. of 10, 20, 30, and 50 *tsien* or cash; (2) *Notes of Hundreds*, viz., of 100, 200, and 500 *tsien*; and (3) *Notes of Strings or Thousands* of cash, or in other words of *Liangs* or ounces of silver (otherwise *Tael*), viz. of 1000 and 2000 *tsien*. There were also notes printed on silk for 1, 2, 3, 5, and 10 ounces each, valued at par in silver, but these would not circulate. In 1275, it should be mentioned, there had been a supplementary issue of small notes for 2, 3, and 5 cash each.

Marsden states an equation between Marco's values of the Notes and the actual Chinese currency, to which Biot seems to assent. I doubt its correctness, for his assumed values of the groat or *grosso* and tornesel are surely wrong. The *grosso* ran at that time 18 to the gold ducat or *sequin*, and allowing for the then higher relative value of silver, should have contained about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of silver. The ducat was also equivalent to 2 *lire*, and the *tornese* (*Romanin*, III. 343) was 4 deniers. Now the denier is always, I believe,  $\frac{1}{24}$  of the *lira*. Hence the *tornese* would be  $\frac{1}{6}$  of the *grosso*.

But we are not to look for exact correspondences, when we see Polo applying round figures in European coinage to Chinese currency.

His bezant notes, I agree with Marsden, here represent the Chinese notes for one and more ounces of silver. And here the correspondence of value is much nearer than it seems at first sight. The Chinese *liang* or ounce of silver is valued commonly at 6s. 7d., say roundly 80d. But the relation of gold and silver in civilized Asia was then (see *Cathay*, p. ccl. and 442) as 10 to 1, not, as with us now, more than 15 to 1. Wherefore the *liang* in relation to gold would be worth 120 pence or 10 shillings, a little over the Venetian ducat and somewhat less than the bezant or *denar*. We shall then find the table of Chinese issues, as compared with Marco's equivalents, to stand thus:—

CHINESE ISSUES, AS RECORDED.	MARCO POLO'S STATEMENT.
For 10 ounces of silver (viz., the Chinese <i>Ting</i> ) .....	10 bezants.
For 1 ounce of silver, i.e. 1 <i>liang</i> , or 1000 <i>tsien</i> (cash) .....	1 "
For 500 <i>tsien</i> .....	10 groats.
200 " .....	5 " (should have been 4).
100 " .....	2 "
50 " .....	1 "
30 " .....	$\frac{1}{2}$ " (but the proportionate equivalent of a half groat would be 25 <i>tsien</i> ).
20 " .....	
10 " .....	1 tornesel (but the prop. equivalent would be $7\frac{1}{2}$ <i>tsien</i> ).
5 " .....	$\frac{1}{2}$ " (but prop. equivalent $3\frac{3}{4}$ <i>tsien</i> ).

Pauthier has given from the Chinese Annals of the Mongol Dynasty a complete Table of the Issues of Paper-Money during every year of Kublai's reign (1260-1294), estimated at their nominal value in *Ting* or tens of silver ounces. The lowest issue was in 1269, of 228,960 ounces, which at the rate of 120*d.* to the ounce (see above) = 114,480*l.*, and the highest was in 1290, viz., 50,002,500 ounces, equivalent at the same estimate to 25,001,250*l.* whilst the total amount in the 34 years was 249,654,290 ounces or 124,827,144*l.* in nominal value. Well might Marco speak of the vast quantity of such notes that the Great Kaan issued annually!

To complete the history of the Chinese paper-currency, so far as we can :

In 1309, a new issue took place with the same provision as in Kublai's last issue, i.e. each note of the new issue was to exchange against 5 of the last of the same nominal value. And it was at the same time prescribed that the notes should exchange at par with metals, which of course it was beyond the power of Government to enforce, and so the notes were abandoned. Issues continued from time to time to the end of the Mongol Dynasty. The paper-currency is spoken of by Odoric (1320-30), by Pegolotti (1330-40), and by Ibn Batuta (1348), as still the chief, if not sole, currency of the Empire. According to the Chinese authorities, the credit of these issues was constantly diminishing, as 'tis easy to suppose. But 'tis odd that all the Western Travellers speak as if the notes were as good as gold. Pegolotti, writing for mercantile men, and from the information (as we may suppose) of mercantile men, says explicitly that there was no depreciation.

The Ming Dynasty for a time carried on the system of paper-money; with the difference that while under the Mongols no other currency had been admitted, their successors made payments in notes, but accepted only hard cash from their people! In 1448 the *chiao* of 1000 cash was worth but 3. Barbaro still heard talk of the Chinese paper-currency from travellers whom he met at Azov about this time; but after 1455 there is said to be no more mention of it in Chinese history.

I have never heard of the preservation of any note of the Mongols; but some of the Ming survive and are highly valued as curiosities in China. The late Sir G. T. Staunton appears to have possessed one; Dr. Lockhart formerly had two, of which he gave one to Sir Harry Parkes, and retains the other. The paper is so dark as to explain Marco's description of it as black. By Dr. Lockhart's kindness I am enabled to give a reduced representation of this note, as near a facsimile as we have been able to render it, but with some *restoration*, e.g. of the *seals*, of which on the original there is the barest indication remaining.

Notwithstanding the disuse of Government issues of paper-money from that time till recent years, there had long been in some of the cities of China a large use of private and local promissory notes as currency. In Fuchau this was especially the case; bullion was almost entirely displaced, and the banking-houses in that city were counted by hundreds. These were under no government control; any individual or company having sufficient capital or credit could establish a bank and issue their bills, which varied in amount from 100 cash to 1000 dollars. Some fifteen years ago the Imperial Government seems to have been induced by the exhausted state of the Treasury, and these large examples of the local use of paper-currency, to consider projects for resuming that system after the disuse of four centuries. A curious report by a committee of the Imperial Supreme Council, on a project for such a currency, appears among the papers published by the Russian Mission at Peking. It is unfavourable to the particular project, but we gather from other sources that the Government not long afterwards did open banks in the large cities of the Empire for the issue of a new paper-currency, but that it met with bad success. At Fuchau, in 1858, I learn from one notice, the dollar was worth from 18,000 to 20,000 cash in Government Bills. Dr. Rennie, in 1861, speaks of the dollar at Peking as valued at 15,000 and later at 25,000 paper cash. Sushun the Regent had issued a vast number of notes through banks of his own in various parts of Peking. These he failed to redeem, causing the failure of all the banks, and great consequent commotion in the city. The Regent had led the Emperor systematically into debauched habits which ended in paralysis. On the Emperor's death the Empress caused the arrest and execution of Sushun. His conduct in connexion with the bank failures was so bitterly resented that when the poor wretch was led to execution (Nov. 8, 1861), as I learn from an eye-witness, the defrauded creditors lined the streets and cheered.

I owe to the same kind aid that sent the Ming Note the example of this unlucky Minister's Note, of which I give a facsimile over leaf.

The Japanese also had a paper-currency in the 14th century. It is different in form from that of China. That figured by Siebold is a strip of strong paper, doubled at its long by 12 in. wide, bearing a representation of the sun and moon, with long inscriptions in Chinese characters, such as *Bank of Japan*, and an indication of value, as *1000*.

Japanese characters. I do not learn whether notes of considerable amount are still used in Japan; but Sir R. Alcock speaks of bank-notes for small change from 30 to 500 cash and more, as in general use in the interior.

Two notable and disastrous attempts to imitate the Chinese system of currency took place in the middle ages; one of them in Persia, apparently in Polo's very presence, the other in India some 36 years later.

The first was initiated in 1294 by the worthless Kaikhatu Khan, when his own and his minister's extravagance had emptied the Treasury, on the suggestion of a financial officer called 'Izzuddin Muzaffar. The notes were direct imitations of Kublai's, even the Chinese characters being imitated as part of the device upon them; the Chinese name *Chao* was applied to them, and the Mongol Resident at Tabriz, Pulad Chingsang, was consulted in carrying out the measure. Expensive preparations were made for this object; offices called *Chao-Khanahs* were erected in the principal cities of the provinces, and a numerous staff appointed to carry out the details. Ghazan Khan in Khorasan, however, would have none of it, and refused to allow any of these preparations to be made within his government. After the constrained use of the Chao for two or three days Tabriz was in an uproar; the markets were closed; the people rose and murdered 'Izzuddin; and the whole project had to be abandoned. Marco was in Persia at this time, or just before, and Sir John Malcolm not unnaturally suggests that he might have had something to do with the scheme; a suggestion which excites a needless commotion in the breast of M. Pauthier. We may draw from the story the somewhat notable conclusion that *Block-printing* was practised, at least for this one purpose, at Tabriz in 1294.

The other like enterprize was that of Sultan Mahomed Tughlak of Dehli, in 1330-31. This also was undertaken for like reasons, and was in professed imitation of the Chao of Cathay. Mahomed, however, used copper tokens instead of paper; the copper being made apparently of equal weight to the gold or silver coin which it represented. The system seems to have had little more vogue than at Tabriz, but was speedily brought to an end by the ease with which forgeries on an enormous scale were practised. The Sultan, in hopes of reviving the credit of his currency, ordered that every one bring tokens the Treasury should have them cashed in gold or silver. The people who in despair had flung aside their copper coins, and who in their houses, all rushed to the Treasury and in silver. In this way the Treasury soon copper coins had as little circulation as ever, and a new issue was given to the State."

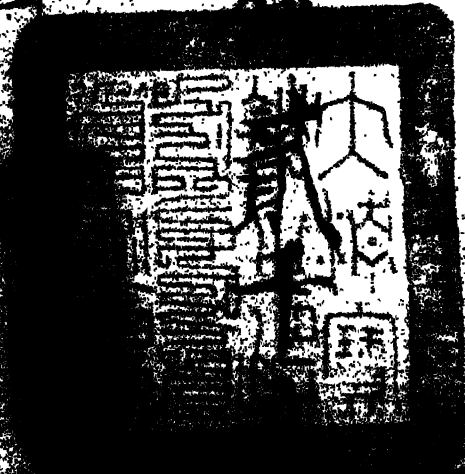
An odd issue of currency, not of paper, but of leather, took place in Italy a few years before Polo's birth. The Emperor Frederick II, at the close of his reign in 1241, being in great straits for money, issued a new coin with the mark of his name at the mint of the city of

大清

銀字第五千三百八十五號

準足制錢

咸豐貳年





## THE TWELVE BARONS.

This silver coinage was very popular, especially at Florence, and was afterwards honorably redeemed by Frederic's Treasury.

*Alagni*, in *Mon. del. d'Asie*, I. 373. seqq.; *Biot*, in *J. As.* ser. 3; *Wittm.*; *Marsden and Paulsen*, in loco; *Parkes*, in *J. R. A. S.* XIII. 179; *Deville*, 152. seqq.; *Wylie*, *J. of Shanghai Lit. and Scient. Soc.* No. 1; *Arbeiten der kais. russ. Gesandtschaft zu Peking*, I. p. 48; *Rennie*, *Coins*, &c. I. 295, 347; *Birk*, in *Nouv. Chron.* XII. 169; Information from *Dr. Latham*; *Alcock*, II. 86; *D'Osson*, IV. 53; *Cowell*, in *J. A. S. B.* XXIX. 183. seqq.; *Thomas*, *Coins of Patan Sovs. of Hind.* (from *Numism. Chron.* 1852), p. 139. seqq.; *Kington's Fred.* II. II. 195.)

## CHAPTER XXV.

CONCERNING THE TWELVE BARONS WHO ARE SET OVER ALL THE AFFAIRS OF THE GREAT KAAH.

You must know that the Great Kaan hath chosen twelve great Barons to whom he hath committed all the necessary affairs of thirty-four great provinces; and now I will tell you particulars about them and their establishments.

You must know that these twelve Barons reside all together in a very rich and handsome palace, which is inside the city of Cambaluc, and consists of a variety of edifices, with many suites of apartments. To every province is assigned a judge and several clerks, and all reside in this palace, where each has his separate quarters. These judges and clerks administer all the affairs of the provinces to which they are attached, under the direction of the twelve Barons. However, when an affair is of very great importance, the twelve Barons lay before the Emperor, and he decides as he thinks best. But the power of those twelve Barons is so great, that they govern the government for all those great provinces which I have mentioned, and with their hands they govern the whole of the Great Kaan's

Those twelve Barons also have such authority that they can dispose of the movements of the forces, and send them whither, and in such strength as, they please. This is done indeed with the Emperor's cognizance, but still the orders are issued on their authority. They are styled SHIENG, which is as much as to say "The Supreme Court," and the palace where they abide is also called *Shieng*. This body forms the highest authority at the Court of the Great Kaan; and indeed they can favour and advance whom they will. I will not now name the 34 provinces to you, because they will be spoken of in detail in the course of this Book.'

NOTE 1.—Pauthier's extracts from the Chinese annals of the dynasty, in illustration of this subject, are interesting. These, as he represents them, show the council of ministers usually to have consisted of twelve high officials, viz.: 2 *Ching-siang* or (chief) ministers of state, one styled, "of the Right," and the other "of the Left;" 4 called *P'ing-chang ching-ssé*, which seems to mean something like ministers in charge of special departments; 4 Assistant ministers; 2 Counsellors.

Rashiduddin, however, limits the council to the two first classes: "Strictly speaking, the council of state is composed of four Chingsang (*Ching-siang*) or great officers (*Wazirs*, he afterwards terms them), and four Fanchán (*P'ing-chang*) or associated members, taken from the nations of the Tajiks, Cathayans, Ighurs, and Arkaun."

In a later age we find the twelve Barons reappearing in the pages of Mendoza: "The King hath in this city of Tabin (Peking), where he is resident, a royal council of twelve counsellors and a president, chosen men throughout all the kingdom, and such as have had experience in government many yeares." And also in the early centuries of the Christian era we hear that the Khan of the Turks had his twelve grandees, divided into those of the Right and those of the Left, probably a copy from a Chinese order then also existing.

But to return to Rashiduddin: "As the Kaan generally resides at the capital, he has erected a place for the sittings of the Great Council, called *Sing*. . . . The dignitaries mentioned above are expected to attend daily at the *Sing*, and to make themselves acquainted with all that passes there."

The *Sing* of Rashid is evidently the Shieng or Sheng (*Scieng*) of Polo. M. Pauthier is on this point somewhat contemptuous towards Neumann, who, he says, confounds Marco Polo's twelve barons or ministers of state with the chiefs of the twelve great provincial governments called *Sing*, who had their residence at the chief cities of those



governments; whilst in fact Polo's *Scieng* (he asserts) has nothing to do with the *Sing*, but represents the Chinese word *Siang* "a minister," and "the office of a minister."

It is very probable that two different words, *Siang* and *Sing*, got confounded by the non-Chinese attachés of the imperial court; but it seems to me quite certain that they applied the same word, *Sing* or *Sheng*, to both institutions, viz., to the high council of state, and to the provincial governments. It also looks, as if Marco Polo himself had made that very confusion with which Pauthier charges Neumann. For whilst here he represents the twelve Barons as forming a council of state at the capital, we find further on, when speaking of the city of Yangcheu, he says: "*Et si siet en ceste cité uns des xii Barons du Grant Kaan; car elle est esleue pour un des xii sieges*," where the last word is probably a mistranscription of *sciengs* or *sings*, and in any case the reference is to a distribution of the empire into twelve governments.

To be convinced that *Sing* was used by foreigners in the double sense that I have said, we have only to proceed with Rashiduddin's account of the administration. After what we have already quoted, he goes on: "The *Sing* of Khanbaligh is the most eminent, and the building is very large . . . *Sings* do not exist in all the cities, but only in the capitals of great provinces . . . In the whole empire of the Kaan there are twelve of these *Sings*; but that of Khanbaligh is the only one which has Ching-sangs amongst its members." Wassáf again, after describing the greatness of Khanzai (Kinsay of Polo), says: "These circumstances characterize the capital itself, but 400 cities of note, and embracing ample territories, are dependent on its jurisdiction, insomuch that the most inconsiderable of those cities surpasses Baghdad and Shiraz. In the number of these cities are Lankinfu and Zaitun, and Chinkalán: for they call Khanzai a *Shing*, i.e. a great city in which the high and mighty council of administration holds its meetings." Friar Odoric again says: "This empire hath been divided by the Lord thereof into twelve parts, each one whereof is termed a *Sing*."

Polo, it seems evident to me, knew nothing of Chinese. His *Shieng* is no direct attempt to represent any Chinese word, but simply the term that he had been used to employ in talking Persian or Turki, in the way that Rashiduddin and Wassáf employ it.

I find no light as to the 34 provinces into which Polo represents the empire as divided.

(*Cathay*, 263 seqq., and 137; *Mendoza*, l. 96; *Erdmann*, 142; *Hammer's Hissáf*, p. 42, but corrected.)

## CHAPTER XXVI.

HOW THE KAAH'S POSTS AND RUNNERS ARE SPED THROUGH MANY LANDS AND PROVINCES.

Now you must know that from this city of Cambaluc proceed many roads and highways leading to a variety of provinces, one to one province, another to another; and each road receives the name of the province to which it leads; and it is a very sensible thing.<sup>1</sup> And the messengers of the Emperor in travelling from Cambaluc, be the road whichsoever they will, find at every 25 miles of the journey a station which they call *Yamb*,<sup>2</sup> or, as we should say, the "Horse-Post-House." And at each of those stations used by the messengers there is a large and handsome building for them to put up at, in which they find all the rooms furnished with fine beds and all other necessary articles in rich silk, and where they are provided with everything they can want. If even a king were to arrive at one of these, he would find himself well lodged.

At some of these stations, moreover, there shall be posted some 400 horses standing ready for the use of the messengers; at others there shall be 200, according to the requirements, and to what the Emperor has established in each case. At every 25 miles, as I said, or any how at every 30 miles, you find one of these stations, on all the principal highways leading to the different provincial governments; and the same is the case throughout all the chief provinces subject to the Great Kaan.<sup>3</sup> Even when the messengers have to pass through a roadless tract where neither house nor hostel exists, still there the station-houses have been established just the same, excepting that the intervals are somewhat greater, and the day's journey is fixed at 35 to 45 miles, instead of 25 to 30. But they are provided with horses and all the other necessities just like those we have described; so that the Emperor's messengers, come they

from what region they may, find everything ready for them.

And in sooth this is a thing done on the greatest scale of magnificence that ever was seen. Never had emperor, king, or lord, such wealth as this manifests! For it is a fact that on all these posts taken together there are more than 300,000 horses kept up, specially for the use of the messengers. And the great buildings that I have mentioned are more than 10,000 in number, all richly furnished as I told you. The thing is on a scale so wonderful and costly that it is hard to bring oneself to describe it.<sup>4</sup>

But now I will tell you another thing that I had forgotten, but which ought to be told whilst I am on this subject. You must know that by the Great Kaan's orders there has been established between those post-houses at every interval of 3 miles, a little fort with some 40 houses round about it, in which dwell the people who act as the Emperor's foot-runners. Every one of those runners wears a great wide belt, set all over with bells, so that as they run the 3 miles from post to post their bells are heard jingling a long way off. And thus on reaching the post the runner finds another man similarly equipt, and all ready to take his place, who instantly takes over whatsoever he has in charge, and with it receives a slip of paper from the clerk who is always at hand for the purpose; and so the new man sets off and runs his 3 miles. At the next station he finds his relief ready in like manner; and so the post proceeds, with a change at every 3 miles. And in this way the Emperor, who has an immense number of these runners, receives despatches with news from places 10 days' journey off in one day and night; or, if need be, news from a hundred days off in ten days and nights; and that is no small matter! [In fact in the fruit season many a time fruit shall be gathered one morning in Cambaluc, and the evening of the next day it shall reach the Great Kaan at Chanda, a distance of ten days' journey. The clerk who

of the posts notes the time of each courier's arrival and departure; and there are often other officers whose business it is to make monthly visitations of all the posts, and to punish those runners who have been slack in their work.<sup>[2]</sup> The Emperor exempts these men from all tribute, and pays them besides.

Moreover, there are also at those stations other men equipt similarly with girdles hung with bells, who are employed for expresses when there is a call for great haste in sending despatches to any governor of a province, or to give news when any Baron has revolted, or in other such emergencies; and these men travel a good 200 or 250 miles in the day, and as much in the night. I'll tell you how it stands. They take a horse from those at the station which are standing ready saddled, all fresh and in wind, and mount and go at full speed, as hard as they can ride in fact. And when those at the next post hear the bells they get ready another horse and a man equipt in the same way, and he takes over the letter or whatever it be, and is off full-speed to the third station, where again a fresh horse is found all ready, and so the despatch speeds along from post to post, always at full gallop with regular change of horses. And the speed at which they go is marvellous. [By night, however, they cannot go so fast as by day, because they have to be accompanied by footmen with torches, who could not keep up with them at full speed.]

Those men are highly prized; and they could never do it did they not bind hard the stomach, chest, and head with strong bands. And each of them carries with him a gerfalcon tablet, in sign that he is bound on an urgent express; so that if perchance his horse break down, or he meet with other mishap, whomsoever he may fall in with on the road, he is empowered to make him dismount and give up his horse. Nobody dares refuse in such a case: so that the courier hath always a good fresh nag to carry him.

Now all these numbers of post-horses cost the Emperor nothing at all; and I will tell you the how and the why. Every city, or village, or hamlet, that stands near one of those post-stations, has a fixed demand made on it for as many horses as it can supply, and these it must furnish to the post. And in this way are provided all the posts of the cities, as well as the towns and villages round about them; only in uninhabited tracts the horses are furnished at the expense of the Emperor himself.

[Nor do the cities maintain the full number, say of 400 horses, always at their station, but month by month 200 shall be kept at the station, and the other 200 at grass, coming in their turn to relieve the first 200. And if there chance to be some river or lake to be passed by the runners and horse-posts, the neighbouring cities are bound to keep 3 or 4 boats in constant readiness for the purpose.]

And now I will tell you of the great bounty exercised by the Emperor towards his people twice a year.

NOTE 1.—The G. Text has "*et c'est tout sçue chouse*;" Pauthier's Text, "*mais il est moult celi*." The latter seems absurd. I have no doubt, that *sçue* is correct, and is an Italianism, *saputo* having sometimes the sense of prudent or judicious. Thus P. della Valle (II. 26) speaking of Shah Abbas: "*Ma noti V. S. i tiri di questo re, saputo insieme e bizzarro*," "acute with all his eccentricity."

NOTE 2.—Both Neumann and Pauthier seek Chinese etymologies of this Mongol word, which the Tartars carried with them all over Asia. It survives in Persian and Turki in the senses both of a post-house and a post-horse. The ambassadors of Shah Rukh on arriving at Sukchu were lodged in the *Yam-Khûna*, or post-house, by the city gate; and they found 99 such Yams between Sukchu and Khanbaligh, at each of which they were supplied with provisions, servants, beds, night-clothes, &c. Odoric likewise speaks of the hosteries called *Rubrugus* applies the same term to quarters in the \_\_\_\_\_, which were assigned for the lodgment of ambassadors. (*Calet.* ccii, 137; *Rubr.* 310.)

NOTE 3.—Martini and Magalhães in the 17th century give nearly the same account of the governing hosteries.

NOTE 4.—Here Erasmus has this digression: "Should any one be so foolish as to think that the Emperor should be such a benefactor to his subjects?"

all this implies, and how they can subsist, the answer is that all the Idolaters, and Saracens as well, take six, eight, or ten wives apiece when they can afford it, and beget an infinity of children. In fact, you shall find many men who have each more than 30 sons who form an armed retinue to their father, and this through the fact of his having so many wives. With us, on the other hand, a man hath but one wife; and if she be barren, still he must abide by her for life, and have no progeny; thus we have not such a population as they have.

"And as regards food, they have abundance; for they generally consume rice, panic, and millet (especially the Tartars, Cathayans, and people of Manzi); and these three crops in those countries render an hundred-fold. Those nations use no bread, but only boil those kinds of grain with milk or meat for their victual. Their wheat, indeed, does not render so much, but this they use only to make vermicelli, and pastes of that description. No spot of arable land is left untilld; and their cattle are infinitely prolific, so that when they take the field every man is followed by six, eight, or more horses for his own use. Thus you may clearly perceive how the population of those parts is so great, and how they have such an abundance of food."

NOTE 5.—The Burmese kings used to have the odoriferous *Durian* transmitted by horse-posts from Tenasserim to Ava. But the most notable example of the rapid transmission of such dainties, and the nearest approach I know of to their despatch by telegraph, was that practised for the benefit of the Fatimite Khalif Aziz (latter part of 10th century), who had a great desire for a dish of cherries of Balbek. The Wazir Yakub-ben Kilis caused 600 pigeons to be despatched from Balbek to Cairo, each of which carried attached to either leg a small silk bag containing a cherry! (*Quat. Makrizi*, IV. 118.)

NOTE 6.—"Note is taken at every post," says Amyot, in speaking of the Chinese practice of last century, "of the time of the courier's arrival, in order that it may be known at what point delays have occurred." (*Mém.* VIII. 185.)

NOTE 7.—The post-system is described almost exactly as in the text by Friar Odoric and the Archbishop of Soltania, in the generation after Polo, and very much in the same way by Magaillans in the 17th century. Posts had existed in China from an old date. They are spoken of by Mas'udi and the *Relations* of the 9th century. They were also in use in India at least in the generation after Polo. The Mongols, too, carried the institution wherever they went.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

HOW THE EMPEROR BESTOWS HELP ON HIS PEOPLE, WHEN THEY ARE AFFLICTED WITH DEARTH OR MURRAIN.

Now you must know that the Emperor sends his Messengers over all his Lands and Kingdoms and Provinces, to ascertain from his officers if the people are afflicted by any dearth through unfavourable seasons, or storms or locusts, or other like calamity; and from those who have suffered in this way no taxes are exacted for that year; nay more, he causes them to be supplied with corn of his own for food and seed. Now this is undoubtedly a great bounty on his part. And when winter comes, he causes inquiry to be made as to those who have lost their cattle, whether by murrain or other mishap, and such persons not only go scot free, but get presents of cattle. And thus, as I tell you, the Lord every year helps and fosters the people subject to him.

[There is another trait of the Great Kaan I should tell you: and that is, that if a chance shot from his bow strike any herd or flock, whether belonging to one person or to many, and however big the flock may be, he takes no tithe thereof for three years. In like manner if the arrow strike a boat full of goods, that boat-load pays no duty; for it is thought unlucky that an arrow strike any one's property; and the Great Kaan says it would be an abomination before God, were such property, that has been struck by the divine wrath, to enter into his Treasury.]

NOTE 1.—The Chinese author already quoted as to Kubla's character (Note 2, chap. xiii. supra) says: "This Prince, at the sight of some evil prognostic, or when there was dearth, would remit taxation, and cause grain to be distributed to those who were in destitution. He would often conclude that there were no punishments if balances were due, or if certain and so he would have the necessities of the people required to be repaid, and a reward given."

Wassaf tells a long story in illustration of Kublai's justice and consideration for the peasantry. One of his sons, with a handful of followers had got separated from the army, and halted at a village in the territory of Bishbaligh, where the people gave them a sheep and wine. Next year two of the party came the same way and demanded a sheep and a stoup of wine. The people gave it, but went to the Kaan and told the story, saying they feared it might grow into a perpetual exaction. Kubla sharply rebuked the Prince, and gave the people compensation and an order in their favour. (*Demaulla*, IX. 460; *Hammer's Wassaf*, 38-9.)

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

HOW THE GREAT KAAN CAUSES TREES TO BE PLANTED BY THE HIGHWAYS.

THE Emperor moreover hath taken order that all the highways travelled by his messengers and the people generally should be planted with rows of great trees a few paces apart; and thus these trees are visible a long way off, and no one can miss the way by day or night. Even the roads through uninhabited tracts are thus planted, and it is the greatest possible solace to travellers. And this is done on all the ways where it can be of service. [The Great Kaan plants these trees all the more readily, because his astrologers and diviners tell him that he who plants trees lives long.

But where the ground is so sandy and desert that trees will not grow, he causes other landmarks, pillars or stones, to be set up to show the way.]

## CHAPTER XXIX.

CONCERNING THE RICE-WINE DRUNK BY THE PEOPLE OF CATHAY.

MOST of the people of Cathay drink wine of the kind that I shall now describe. It is a liquor which they brew of rice with a quantity of excellent spice, in such fashion that it



makes better drink than any other kind of wine; it is not only good, but clear and pleasing to the eye.' And being very hot stuff, it makes one drunk sooner than any other wine.

NOTE 1.—The mode of making Chinese Rice-wine is described in Amyot's *Mémoires*, V. 468 *seqq.* A kind of yeast is employed, with which is often mixed a flour prepared from fragrant herbs, almonds, pine-seeds, dried fruits, &c. Rubruquis says this liquor was not distinguishable, except by smell, from the best wine of Auxerre; a wine so famous in the Middle Ages, that the Historian Friar, Salimbene, went from Lyons to Auxerre on purpose to drink it.\* Ysbrand Ides compares the Rice-wine to Rhenish, John Bell to Canary; a modern traveller quoted by Davis, "in colour, and a little in taste, to Madeira."

## CHAPTER XXX.

CONCERNING THE BLACK STONES THAT ARE DUG IN CATHAY, AND ARE BURN'T FOR FUEL.

It is a fact that all over the country of Cathay there is a kind of black stone existing in beds in the mountains which they dig out and burn like firewood. If you supply the fire with them at night, and see that they are well kindled, you will find them still alight in the morning; and they make such capital fuel that no other is used throughout the country. It is true that they have plenty of wood also but they do not burn it, because those stones burn better and cost less.

[Moreover with that vast number of people, and the number of hot-baths that they maintain— for every one has such a bath at least 3 times a week, and in winter if possible every day, whilst every nobleman and man of wealth has a private bath for his own use—the wood would not suffice for the purpose.]

...great consumption of coal, especially in the brick stoves which are universal even in poor houses. Coal seems to exist in nearly every province of China. It abounds in the hills near Peking and along the road to Kalgan, but the best brought to the capital is from Pingtingcheu in Shansi; a province which is nearly all productive of coal. It is also found in Manchuria, and abundantly in Shantung. It is wrought in various parts of the valley of the Great Kiang, and at the highest point reached by Sarel and Blakiston they found mines on the cliffs over the river, from which the coal was sent down by long bamboo cables, the loaded baskets drawing up the empty ones. The kind in most demand in Central China is the *Kwang* coal, a sort of anthracite. There are numerous varieties in Kiangsi, and the porcelain furnaces of Kingteching in that province are chiefly heated with coal from the adjoining mountains.

In various parts of China, as in Chekiang, Szechuen, and at Peking, they form powdered coal, mixed with mud, into bricks somewhat like our "patent fuel." This practice is noticed by Ibn Batuta, as well as the use of coal in making porcelain, though this he seems to have misunderstood. Rashiduddin also mentions the use of coal in China. It was in use, according to citations of Pauthier's, before the Christian era. It is a popular belief in China that every provincial capital is bound to be established over a coal-field, so as to have a provision in case of siege. It is said that during the British siege of Canton mines were opened to the north of the city.

(*Macgowan* in *Ch. Repos.* XIX. 385-7; *Blakiston*, 133, 265; *Mid. Kingdom*, I. 73, 78; *Amyot*, XI. 334; *Cathay*, 261, 478, 482; *Notes by Rev. A. Williamson* in *J. N. Ch. Br. R.A.S.*, Dec. 1867; *Hedde and Rondot*, p. 63.)

Aeneas Sylvius relates as a miracle that took place before his eyes in Scotland, that poor and almost naked beggars, when *stones* were given them as alms at the church doors, went away quite delighted; for stones of that kind were imbued either with brimstone or with some oily matter, so that they could be burnt instead of wood, of which the country was destitute. (Quoted by *Jos. Robertson*, *Statuta Eccles. Scotic.* I. xciii.)

## CHAPTER XXXI.

HOW THE GREAT KAN CAUSES STORES OF CORN TO BE MADE, TO  
HELP HIS PEOPLE WITHAL IN TIME OF DEARTH.

You must know that when the Emperor sees that corn is cheap and abundant, he buys up large quantities, and has

...in the provinces in great granaries, where it is so well looked after that it will keep for three or four years.

And this applies, let me tell you, to all kinds of corn, whether wheat, barley, millet, rice, panic, or what not, and when there is any scarcity of a particular kind of corn he causes that to be issued. And if the price of the corn is at one bezant the measure, he lets them have it at a bezant for four measures, or at whatever price will produce general cheapness; and every one can have food in this way. And by this providence of the Emperor's, his people can never suffer from dearth. He does the same over his whole Empire; causing these supplies to be stored everywhere according to calculation of the wants and necessities of the people.

NOTE 1. — "*Le fait si bien estuier que il dure bien trois ans ou quatre*" (Pauthier): "*si bien estudier*" (G. T.). I half suspect it should be *estuver* in the sense of "kiln-dry," but both the Geog. Latin and the Crusca render it *gubernare*. Le Comte says: "Rice is always stored in the public granaries for three or four years in advance. It keeps long if care be taken to air it and stir it about; and although not so good to the taste or look as new rice, it is said to be more wholesome."

The Archbishop of Soltania speaks of these stores: "The said Emperor is very pitiful and compassionate; . . . and so when there is dearth in the land he openeth his garners, and giveth forth of his wheat and his rice for half what others are selling it at." Kublai Kaan's measures of this kind are recorded in the annals of the Dynasty as quoted by Pauthier. The same practice is ascribed to the sovereigns of the Tang Dynasty by the old Arab *Relations*. In later days a missionary gives in the *Lettres Edifiantes* an unfavourable account of the action of these public granaries, and of the rascality that occurred in connexion with them (*Journal de l'Asie, Cathay*, 240; *Relat.* 1. 39 *Let. Ed.* XXIV. 76).

## CHAPTER XXXII.

OF THE CHARITY OF THE EMPEROR TO THE POOR.

I HAVE told you how the Great Kaan provides for the distribution of necessities to his people in time of dearth.

by making store in time of cheapness. Now I will tell you of his alms and great charity to the poor of his city of Cambaluc.

You see he causes selection to be made of a number of families in the city which are in a state of indigence, and of such families some may consist of six in the house, some of eight, some of ten, more or fewer in each as it may hap, but the whole number being very great. And each family he causes annually to be supplied with wheat and other corn sufficient for the whole year. And this he never fails to do every year. Moreover, all those who choose to go to the daily almshouse at the Court receive a great loaf apiece hot from the baking, and nobody is denied; for so the Lord hath ordered. And so some 30,000 people go for it every day from year's end to year's end. Now this is a great goodness in the Emperor to take pity of his poor people thus! And they benefit so much by it that they worship him as he were God.

[He also provides the poor with clothes. For he lays a tithe upon all wool, silk, hemp, and the like, from which clothing can be made; and he has these woven and laid up in a building set apart for the purpose; and as all artisans are bound to give a day's labour weekly, in this way the Kaan has these stuffs made into clothing for those poor families, suitable for summer or winter according to the time of year. He also provides the clothing for his troops, and has woollens woven for them in every city, the material for which is furnished by the tithe aforesaid. You should know that the Tartars, before they were converted to the religion of the Idolaters, never practised almsgiving. Indeed when any poor man begged of them they would tell him, "Go with God's curse, for if He loved you as He loves me He would have provided for you!" But the sages of the Idolaters, and especially the *Bacsis* mentioned before, told the Great Kaan that it was a good work to provide for the poor, and that his idols would be greatly

pleased if he did so. And since then he has taken to do for the poor so much as you have heard.' ]

- **NOTE 1.**—This is a curious testimony to an ameliorating effect of Buddhism on rude nations. The general establishment of medical aid for men and animals is alluded to, in the edicts of Asoka; and hospitals for the diseased and destitute were found by Fahian at Palibothra. The Archbishop of Soltania bears like testimony to that in this chapter regarding the charities of the Great Kaan; and Friar Jordanus had also heard of his unexampled almsgiving. Various examples of a charitable spirit in Chinese Institutions will be found in a letter by Père d'Entrecolles in the XVth Recueil of *Lettres Edifiantes*; and a similar detail in *Nevius's China and the Chinese*, Ch. xv. (See *Prinsep's Essays*, II. 15; *Beal's Fah-hian*, 107.)

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

[CONCERNING THE ASTROLOGERS IN THE CITY OF CAMBALUC.]

[THERE are in the city of Cambaluc, what with Christians, Saracens, and Cathayans, some 5000 astrologers and sooth-sayers, whom the Great Kaan provides with annual maintenance and clothing, just as he provides the poor of whom we have spoken, and they are in the constant exercise of their art in this city.

They have a kind of Astrolabe on which are inscribed the planetary signs, the hours and critical points of the whole year. And every year these Christian, Saracen, and Cathayan astrologers, each sect apart, investigate by means of this astrolabe the course and character of the whole year, according to the indications of each of its Moons, in order to discover by the natural course and disposition of the planets, and the other circumstances of the heavens, what shall be the nature of the weather, and what peculiarities shall be produced by each Moon of the year; as for example, under which Moon there shall be thunderstorm and tempests, under which there shall be disease, murrain

wars, disorders, and treasons, and so on according to the indications of each; but always adding that it lies with God to do less or more according to his pleasure. And they write down the results of their examination in certain little pamphlets for the year, which are called *Tacuin*, and these are sold for a groat to all who desire to know what is coming. Those of the astrologers, of course, whose predictions are found to be most exact, are held to be the greatest adepts in their art, and get the greater fame.<sup>1</sup>

And if any one having some great matter in hand, or proposing to make a long journey for traffic or other business, desires to know what will be the upshot, he goes to one of these astrologers and says; "Turn up your books and see what is the present aspect of the heavens, for I am going away on such and such a business." Then the astrologer will reply that the applicant must also tell the year, month, and hour of his birth; and when he has got that information he will see how the horoscope of his nativity combines with the indications of the time when the question is put, and then he predicts the result, good or bad, according to the aspect of the heavens.

You must know, too, that the Tartars reckon their years by twelves; the sign of the first year being the Lion, of the second the Ox, of the third the Dragon, of the fourth the Dog, and so forth up to the twelfth;<sup>2</sup> so that when one is asked the year of his birth he answers that it was in the year of the Lion (let us say) on such a day or night, at such an hour, and such a moment. And the father of a child always takes care to write these particulars down in a book. When the twelve yearly symbols have been gone through, then they come back to the first, and go through with them again in the same succession.]

# CANTO XXXIII. THE ASTROLOGERS OF CAMBALUC.

partly an ephemeris containing the longitude and latitude of the planets, their conjunctions and oppositions, and other such matter. The *Taccuino* is full of predictions regarding war, pestilence, and famine; it indicates the favourable time for putting on new clothes, for getting married or engaged, for making a journey, and so forth. They put entire faith in it, and whoever can afford one governs himself in all things by its rules." (St. V. ch. xiv.)

The use of the term by Marco may possibly be an illustration of what I have elsewhere propounded, viz. that he was not acquainted with Chinese, but that his intercourse and conversation lay chiefly with the foreigners at the Kaan's Court, and probably was carried on in the Persian language. But not long after the date of our Book we find the word used in Italian by Jacopo Alighieri (Dante's son):—

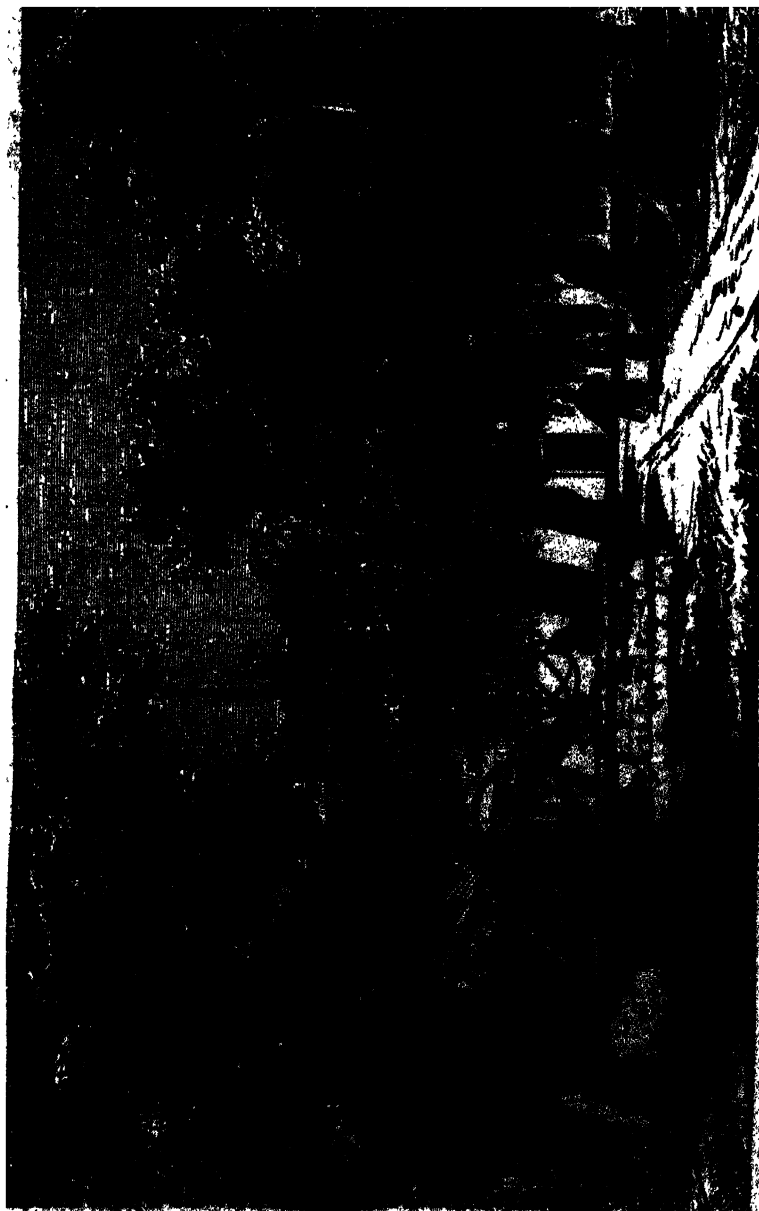
"A voler giudicare  
Si conviene adeguare  
Inprima il *Taccuino*,  
Per vedere il cammino  
Come i Pianeti vanno  
Per tutto quanto l'anno."

—*Rime Antiche Toscane*, III. 10.

Marco does not allude to the fact that almanacs were published by the Government, as they were then and still are. Pauthier (515 *seqq.*) gives some very curious details on this subject from the Annals of the Yuen. In the accounts of the year 1328, it appears that no less than 3,123,185 copies were printed in three different sizes at different prices, besides a separate almanac for the *Hwei-Hwei* or Mahomedans. Had Polo not omitted to touch on the issue of almanacs by Government he could scarcely have failed to enter on the subject of printing, on which he has kept a silence so singular and unaccountable.

The Chinese Government still "considers the publication of a Calendar of the first importance and utility. It must do everything in its power, not only to point out to its numerous subjects the distribution of the seasons, . . . but on account of the general superstition it must mark in the almanac the lucky and unlucky days, the best days for being married, for undertaking a journey, for making their dresses, for buying or building, for presenting petitions to the Emperor, and for many other cases of ordinary life. By this means the Government keeps the people within the limits of humble obedience; it is for this reason that the Emperors of China established the Academy of Astronomy" (Pauth. I. 358). The acceptance of the Imperial Almanac by a foreign Prince is considered an acknowledgment of vassalage to the Emperor.

It is a point which is now a subject of constant agitation at the Government of Rome. It has been decided by the Vatican Council, but it is becoming more and more a subject of discussion. The introduction of the almanac into the hands of the people is considered a dangerous thing.



Interior of the Observatory at Peking, with ancient instruments of the Mongol Era.



The price in 1328 was 1 *tsien* or cash for the cheapest edition, and 1 *liang* or tael of silver for the *édition de luxe*; but as these prices were in paper-money it is extremely difficult to say, in the varying depreciation of that currency, what the price really amounted to.

We may note that in Polo's time one of the principal officers of the Mathematical Board was *Gaisue*, a native of *Folin* or the Byzantine Empire, who was also in charge of the medical department of the Court. Regarding the Observatory, of which we here give a cut, see note at p. 333 *supra*. On the importance attached by the Chinese to these auguries in all the affairs of life, and on the public diviners and fortune-tellers, see *Semedo*, p. 118 *seqq.*; *Kidd*, p. 313 (also for preceding references, *Mid. Kingdom*, II. 152; *Gaubil*, 136).

• NOTE 2.—The real cycle of the Mongols, which was also that of the Chinese, runs: 1. Rat; 2. Ox; 3. Tiger; 4. Hare; 5. Dragon; 6. Serpent; 7. Horse; 8. Sheep; 9. Ape; 10. Cock; 11. Dog; 12. Swine. But as such a cycle is too short to avoid confusion, it is combined with a coefficient cycle of *ten* epithets in such wise as to produce a 60-year cycle of compound names before the same shall recur. These coefficient epithets are found in three different forms: (1) From the Elements, Wood, Fire, Earth, Iron, Water, attaching to each a masculine and feminine attribute so as to make ten epithets. (2) From the Colours, Blue, Red, Yellow, White, Black, similarly treated. (3) By terms without meaning in Mongol, directly adopted or imitated from the Chinese, *Ga*, *Yi*, *Bing*, *Ting*, &c. Thus 1864 was the first year of a 60-year cycle:—

1864 = (Masc.) Wood-Rat Year	= (Masc.) Blue-Rat Year.
1865 = (Fem.) Wood-Ox Year	= (Fem.) Blue-Ox Year.
1866 = (Masc.) Fire-Tiger Year	= (Masc.) Red-Tiger Year.
1867 = (Fem.) Fire-Hare Year	= (Fem.) Red-Hare Year.
1923 = (Fem.) Water-Swine Year	= (Fem.) Black-Swine Year.

And then a new cycle commences just as before.

This Calendar was carried by the Mongols into all their dominions, and it would appear to have long survived them in Persia. Thus a document issued in favour of Sir John Chardin by the Shah of Persia of Isfahan, bears the strange date for a Mahomedan luminary of "The year of the Swine." The Hindus also had a 60-year cycle, but with them each year had an independent name.

The Mongols borrowed their system from the Chinese, who attribute its invention to the Emperor Shun, and its imitation to the first king of his race, corresponding to the Emperor Yao. The Chinese system is what we have called the *Heavenly Cycle*, and the *Earthly Cycle*. The *Heavenly Cycle* is the "Heavenly Cycle" of the Chinese, and the *Earthly Cycle* is the "Earthly Cycle" of the Chinese. The *Heavenly Cycle* is not to years, but to the elements, and the *Earthly Cycle* is to years, being equal to the *Heavenly Cycle*. The *Heavenly Cycle* and the *Earthly Cycle* have two applications, one to the years, and the other to the months.

time of any man's birth constitute what the Chinese call the "Eight Characters" of his age, to which constant reference is made in some of their systems of fortune-telling, and in the selection of propitious days for the transaction of business. To this system the text alludes. A curious account of the principles of prognostication on such a basis will be found in *Doolittle's Social Life of the Chinese* (p. 579 *seqq.*; on the Calendar, see Schmidt's Preface to *S. Setzen; Pallas, Sammlungen*, II. 228 *seqq.*; *Prinsep's Essays, Useful Tables*, 146.)

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

[CONCERNING THE RELIGION OF THE CATHAYANS;<sup>1</sup> THEIR VIEWS AS TO THE SOUL; AND THEIR CUSTOMS.

As we have said before, these people are Idolaters, and as regards their gods, each has a tablet fixed high up on the wall of his chamber, on which is inscribed a name which represents the Most High and Heavenly God; and before this they pay daily worship, offering incense from a thurible, raising their hands aloft, and gnashing their teeth<sup>2</sup> three times, praying Him to grant them health of mind and body; but of Him they ask nought else. And below on the ground there is a figure which they call *Natigai*, which is the god of things terrestrial. To him they give a wife and children, and they worship him in the same manner, with incense, and gnashing of teeth,<sup>3</sup> and lifting up of hands; and of him they ask seasonable weather, and the fruits of the earth, children, and so forth.<sup>3</sup>

Their view of the immortality of the soul is after this fashion. They believe that as soon as a man dies, his soul enters into another body, going from a good to a better, or from a bad to a worse, according as he hath conducted himself well or ill. That is to say, a poor man, if he have passed through life good and sober, shall be born again of a gentlewoman, and shall be a gentleman; and on a second occasion shall be born of a princess and shall be a prince, and

so on, always rising, till he be absorbed into the Deity. But if he have borne himself ill, he who was the son of a gentleman shall be reborn as the son of a boor, and from a boor shall become a dog, always going down lower and lower.

The people have an ornate style of speech; they salute each other with a cheerful countenance, and with great politeness; they behave like gentlemen, and eat with great propriety.<sup>4</sup> They show great respect to their parents; and should there be any son who offends his parents, or fails to minister to their necessities, there is a public office which has no other charge but that of punishing unnatural children, who are proved to have acted with ingratitude towards their parents.<sup>5</sup>

Criminals of sundry kinds who have been imprisoned, are released at a time fixed by the Great Kaan (which occurs every three years), but on leaving prison they are branded on one cheek that they may be recognized.

The Great Kaan hath prohibited all gambling and sharpening, things more prevalent there than in any other part of the world. In doing this, he said: "I have conquered you by force of arms, and all that you have is mine; if, therefore, you gamble away your property, it is in fact my property that you are gambling away." Not that he took anything from them however.

I must not omit to tell you of the orderly way in which the Kaan's Barons and others conduct themselves in coming to his presence. In the first place, within a half mile of the place where he is, out of reverence for his exalted majesty, everybody preserves a mien of the greatest meekness and quiet, so that no noise of shrill voices or loud talk shall be heard. And every one of the and nobles carries always with him a handsome little vessel to spit in whilst he remains in the Hall of Audience—for no one dares spit on the floor of the hall—and when he hath spitten he covers it up and puts it aside. So also they all have certain handsome buskins of white leather, which

they carry in, and, when summoned by the sovereign, on arriving at the entrance to the hall, they put on these white buskins, and give their others in charge to the servants, in order that they may not foul the fine carpets of silk and gold and divers colours.]

NOTE 1.—Ramusio's heading has *Tartars*, but it is manifestly of the Cathayans or Chinese that the author speaks throughout this chapter.

NOTE 2.—“*Sbattono i denti*.” This is almost certainly, as Marsden has noticed, due to some error of transcription. Probably *Battono i fronti*, or something similar, was the true reading.

NOTE 3.—The latter part of this passage has, I doubt not, been more or less interpolated, seeing that it introduces again as a *Chinese* divinity the rude object of primitive Tartar worship, of which we have already heard in Book I. ch. liii. And regarding the former part of the passage, one cannot but have some doubt whether what was taken for the symbol of the Most High, was not the ancestral tablet, which is usually placed in one of the inner rooms of the house, and before which worship is performed at fixed times, and according to certain established forms. Something, too, may have been known of the emperor's worship of heaven at the great circular temple at Peking, where incensed offerings are made before a tablet, on which is inscribed the name Yuh-Hwang-Shang-ti, which some interpret as “The Supreme Ruler of the Imperial Heavens,” and regard as the nearest approach to pure Theism of which there is any indication in Chinese worship (see *Doolittle*, pp. 170, 625).

The charge of irreligion against the Chinese is an old one, and is made by Hayton in nearly the same terms as it often is by modern missionaries: “And though these people have the acutest intelligence in all matters wherein material things are concerned, yet you shall never find among them any knowledge or perception of spiritual things.” Yet it is a mistake to suppose that this insensibility has been so universal as it is often represented. To say nothing of the considerable numbers who have adhered faithfully to the Roman Catholic Church, the large number of Mahomedans in China, of whom many must have been proselytes, indicates an interest in religion; and that Buddhism itself was in China once a spiritual power of no small energy will, I think, be plain to any one who reads the very interesting extracts in Schott's essay on Buddhism in Upper Asia and China (*Berlin Acad. of Sciences*, 1846). These seem to be so little known that I will translate two or three of them. “In the years *Euan-yeu* of the Sung (A.D. 1086-1093), a pious matron with her two servants lived entirely to the Land of Enlightenment. One of the maids said one day to her companion: ‘To-night I

at any preceding time  
I said to the lady: 'Yesterday  
in a dream, and said to me:

What a singular counterpart the striking conclusion here forms to Dante's tremendous assault on a still living villain,—or enemy!

—————“che per sua opra  
 In anima in Cocito già si bagna,  
 Ed in corpo per viva ancor di sopra,”  
 —————*Inf. xxviii. 155.*

Again: "I knew a man who during his life had killed many living beings, and was at last struck with remorse. The arrows in store for his sin-laden soul passed not by the mark. I asked him, and exhorted him to call on the Lord, but he would not listen, and spoke only of indifferent matters. His sin-laden soul was smothered, as the consequence of his indifference to what he was doing. When we have

such a man when once his eyes were closed? Wherefore let man be converted while there is yet time! In this life the night followeth the day, and the winter followeth the summer; that, all men are aware of. But that life is followed by death, no man will consider. Oh, what blindness and obduracy is this!" (p. 93).

Again: "Hoang-ta-tie, of T'ancheu (Changshu-fu in Honan), who lived under the Sung, followed the craft of a blacksmith. Whenever he was at his work he used to call without intermission on the name of Amita Buddha. One day he handed to his neighbours the following verses of his own composing to be spread about:—

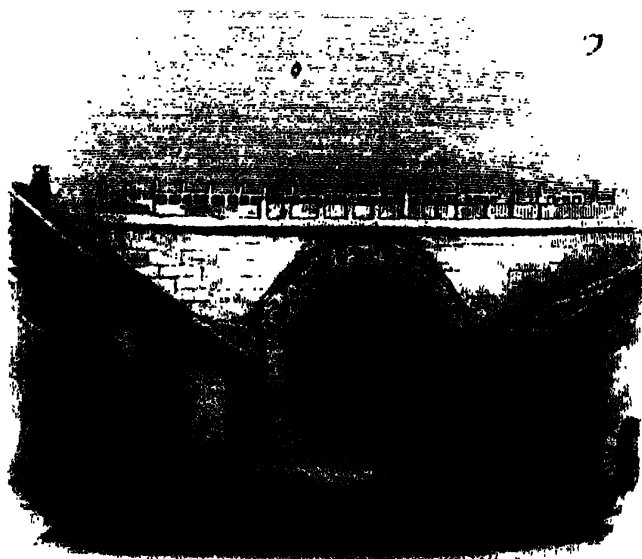
"Ding dong! The Hammer strokes fall long and fast,  
Until the Iron turns to Steel at last!  
Now shall the long long Day of Rest begin,  
The Land of Bliss Eternal calls me in."

Thereupon he died. But his verses spread all over Honan, and many learned to call upon Buddha" (103).

Once more: "In my own town there lived a physician by name Chang-yan-ming. He was a man who never took payment for his treatment from any one in poor or indifferent circumstances; nay, he would often make presents to such persons of money or corn to lighten their lot. If a rich man would have his advice and paid him a fee, he never looked to see whether it were much or little. If a patient lay so dangerously ill that Yanming despaired of his recovery, he would still give him good medicine to comfort his heart, but never took payment for it. I knew this man for many a year, and I never heard the word *Money* pass his lips! One day fire broke out in the town, and laid the whole of the houses in ashes; only that of the physician was spared. His sons and grandsons reached high dignities" (p. 110).

NOTE 4.—"True politeness cannot of course be taught by rules merely, but a great degree of urbanity and kindness is everywhere shown, whether owing to the naturally placable disposition of the people, or to the effects of their early instruction in the forms of politeness" (*Mid. Kingdom*, II. 68). As regards the "ornate style of speech," a well-bred Chinaman never says *I* or *You*, but for the former, "the little person," "the disciple," "the inferior," and so on; and for the latter, "the learned man," "the master," or even "the emperor." These phrases, however, are not confined to China, most of them having exact parallels in Hindustani courtesy. On this subject and the courteous disposition of the Chinese, see *Fontaney*, in *Lett. Edif.* VII. 287 *seqq.*, also XI. 287 *seqq.*; *Semedo*, 36; *Lecomte*, II. 48 *seqq.* There are, however, strong differences of opinion expressed on this subject; there is, apparently, much more courtesy in the north than in

sometimes accuse their children before the magistrate, and demand his official aid in controlling or punishing them; but such instances are comparatively rare. . . . If the parent require his son to be publicly whipped by the command of the magistrate, the latter is obliged to order the infliction of the whipping. . . . If after punishment the son remain undutiful and disobedient, and his parents demand it at the hands of the magistrate, the latter must, with the consent of the maternal uncles of the son, cause him to be taken out to the high wall in front of the yamun, and have him there publicly whipped to death" (*Doolittle*, 102-3).



Archway erected under the Mongol Dynasty, in the Nankau Pass, N.W. of Peking \*

\* On the walls of this archway is engraved the inscription in six characters of which a representation accompanies ch. xv. of *Prolegne*, note 1.

**LONDON:**  
**PRINTED BY W. CLOWES AND SONS, DUKE STREET, STAMFORD STREET,**  
**AND CHARING CROSS.**



**The morning tide**

(Chakari Mondu)

242

10

**Control**







